Not Like I'll See You Again

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Not Like I'll See You Again

by orphan_account

Summary

Will Graham is a young cop in New Orleans when a string of murders spurs the higher ups to bring in Doctor Hannibal Lecter, a forensic psychologist, to help consult on the case. Despite the grim circumstances of their meeting, the pair hit it off and decide to have some fun under the guise of never seeing each other again only to run into each other almost a decade later in Baltimore.

AKA Will and Hannibal meet when Will is still a cop in New Orleans and hook up. How would things have been different if they had known each other when they "meet" in Jack's office years later.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Will looks in the mirror one more time before leaving for work. He runs a hand hopelessly through his curls to tame them, but they spring back up in a wild halo around his head. He is working a little harder to look presentable today. All patrol officers have been called for a meeting today to be briefed about a new killer in the area. The hope is that if the officers understand the profile, they will be able to more effectively find the killer. He has already murdered six tourists, three couples, and is showing no signs of stopping.

Will had been on the force since he graduated high school five years ago. His ultimate goal was to work for the FBI. His empathy disorder made it easy for him to understand the motives for the crimes and mindsets of the killers they investigated. He thinks he would make a great profiler, but for now, he is a beat cop in New Orleans. He spends most of his time trying to get drunk people home safely, writing tickets, and the occasional violent scene.

Satisfied that there is no taming his curls, but that he otherwise looks fine, Will grabs his wallet and keys from the large wooden bowl from beside his front door and heads to the precinct. Once he gets there, he heads to the conference room and scans the room for his partner, Henry. He sees the older dark skinned man seated in the middle of the room, empty seat by his side, and in the middle of a conversation with their sergeant and another man Will has never seen before. He walks over to Henry and, without looking away from Sergeant Miller, he pats the seat next to him, letting Will know he had saved it for him. Will sits down with a small grin and pulls out a notepad and pen.

“It’s been a while since we have had one of these.” Henry’s slightly accented words punctuated by a wave of his hand around the conference room and all the officers milling around, waiting for the briefing to start. “He must be pretty bad.”

Sergeant Miller runs a handkerchief covered hand over his glistening bald head. “He’s a real sicko, Henry. I hesitated to do this. I didn’t want all of our guys to have to see these scenes. Especially the younger ones.” Will doesn’t miss the way Sergeant Miller’s eyes flicker over to him for a moment before meeting Henry’s again.

“Oh, George. Give ‘em a little more credit than that. They know what they signed up for when they joined. Take Will here,” Will turns to face Henry at hearing his name. Realizing it is an invitation to join the conversation. Henry wraps an arm around his shoulders, smiling at the younger man in a paternal way. “He has a good head on his shoulders. He’s gonna do big things. Just you wait.” Will blushes a deep red. The other man standing with Sergeant Miller seems to notice Will for the first time in that moment. His amber eyes meet Will’s ocean blue ones for the briefest moment before Will drops his gaze. The man is tall with broad shoulders that are emphasized by the cut of his three-piece suit. If Will wasn’t so embarrassed, he would laugh. The man obviously wasn’t from the area. This time of year, the heat and humidity were so bad you could cook an egg on the sidewalk. But if the man is uncomfortable, he didn’t show it. He stands with the posture of a man very sure of himself. His face is sculpted with sharp cheekbones and a strong jaw. Will realizes that he has been

studying the man and that he is being studied in return and looks away completely, but not before seeing the twitch of the man's lips into a small smile.

"I hope so," he manages to say through his embarrassment. Henry pats his shoulder before letting him go.

Sergeant Miller smiles unconsciously at the exchange. He is glad that Henry has taken Will under his wing. He knew he was right. Will could be great, but he needed some guidance. A father figure to guide and teach him some basic street smarts that most of their other recruits already brought to the table when they put on the uniform. Will had all the intangible things: instincts, bravery, a big heart, and a drive for justice. They could help him with the rest of it.

"If I am being honest. It was Doctor Lecter's idea to include everyone. The lieutenant called in a few favors so we could borrow him for a while, until we have a better grip on this guy." Sergeant Miller points to the tall, amber eyed man upon saying "Doctor Lecter." He must have introduced him to Henry before he joined the conversation, Will thinks to himself. "Thank you again for being here," Sergeant Miller says as he claps a hand on the doctor's shoulder.

"No problem at all, and please, call me Hannibal." His lightly accented words were unlike the usual accents Will heard. Not the French that he heard in the square, the Creole he heard from Henry and his family, or the general Southern twang found most everywhere else. He wonders where he is from. Hannibal looks at his watch before looking back to Sergeant Miller. "We should start the briefing before everyone starts to get restless. It was a pleasure talking with you all." Henry murmurs his agreement and Hannibal glances at Henry and Sergeant Miller. He meets Will's gaze again before turning around and walking towards the front of the room with Sergeant Miller on his heels.

Henry turns to face Will again, looking slightly over his shoulder, knowing Will doesn't like forced eye contact. "He's a trip isn't he?" he says motioning to Doctor Lecter discreetly. Will nods with a small huff of laughter and begins to fidget with his notepad. "You okay, kid?" Henry asks as the tempo of Will's toe taps reaches a fever pitch.

"Yeah. Yeah. I am fine. It's just a lot of people." Will hunches his shoulders slightly, as if the force of all the people in the room are causing him to fold in on himself.

"Did you bring the armor I gave you?" Henry asks with a cock of his slightly graying eyebrow. Will nods and pulls a pair of black plastic framed glasses out of his shirt pocket and puts them on. He pushes them up the bridge of his nose. The lenses do not hold a prescription. They are solely to give Will a barrier between himself and the people around him. It also gives him something he can adjust periodically without it seeming like a fidget. His toe tapping slows down after a few minutes and he grins at his partner.

"Thank you," Will says, and he is grateful. He does not know how he got so lucky with his partner. Henry never pushes Will too far out of his comfort zone or boundaries unless he is willing to stand on the limb with him. He doesn't treat Will like he is fragile or not capable of this kind of work. On the contrary, he shows Will how to use his specific skill set to his advantage. Henry knows Will's empathy disorder can be a lot for him to deal with, but it has

been very helpful out on the beat. He is excited to see what Will can do with an actual profile and full details about a case.

Sergeant Miller stands behind the podium and calls for everyone's attention as his assistant is passing out briefing booklets with the profile, case information, and crime scene photos to each officer. "Alright, everyone. Thank you all for being here. As you know, we have a sicko on the loose. He has been luring couples away from the main strip to torture and murder them. So far we have 6 victims total. I don't want any more bloodshed. Our Lieutenant has called in some favors and brought in some help." He motions towards Doctor Lecter who has been standing silently by his side. "Doctor Lecter is a forensic psychologist who will be consulting on this case so we can try to pinpoint who we are looking for. He has put together a profile and will be going over the case as well as the profile with us now so we can hopefully catch this bastard before he does this again." Sergeant Miller wipes his sweaty forehead again with his handkerchief. "Without further ado, Doctor Lecter, show them what you've got."

Doctor Lecter steps towards the podium with a carefully detached, almost bored expression, unless of course you know what to look for. Will knows what to look for. There is a slight flicker of amusement on the man's face when he looks towards the Sergeant. As he clicks through his slides, Will can tell he is in his element completely. He enjoys having the crowd's full attention. The photos he chose do not shy away from the more gruesome aspects of the killer's proclivities. Doctor Lecter chose not to blur any of the crime scene and shows the violence against the female victims just as he shows the violence done to the male victims and Will surmises that he sees it as all the same. Violence is violence. There is nothing personal about it to the doctor. It takes Will a moment before he realizes that he is paying more attention to how the information is given than to what information is given. He takes a breath and refocuses.

From Doctor Lecter's presentation and profile they are told they are looking for a white man between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five years of age. He is charming and good-looking enough to get people to trust him, but not so much so that the partners get jealous or defensive and walk away. He will work in the service industry either as a tour guide, taxi driver, or something else in that vein which gives him the agency and authority to tell perfect strangers where to go and when without them second guessing the instructions. He is someone who knows his way around the city and knows when certain places will be abandoned which leads the Doctor to speculate that he is a native of New Orleans. Doctor Lecter also thinks these murders will continue and escalate until he is caught. He ends the presentation by saying, "This shy boy is perfecting his design. These three crime scenes are just the ones we know are his. I would not be surprised if he has done this before, but I am certain he will do it again with shorter cooling off periods and with more efficiency until he is caught."

Will isn't sure if he should clap or simply nod. The whole presentation feels like a performance to him. He looks around and the others are simply nodding and writing notes. A few officers in the back are asleep. Did no one notice how this man spoke about the killer as though he was a professor providing notes and critique? Did no one else hear the way his tone was schooled into the politely disinterested tone until his final words, where the control slipped just slightly. Will looks over to Henry as Doctor Lecter's presentation ends. "Yeah.

What did you call him earlier? A trip? That's certainly one word for it." Will chuckles a little as he looks back over his notes as Sergeant Miller retakes the podium to give out assigned areas for patrol. Once everyone has their assignments, the conference room starts to clear out.

Will and Henry make no move to leave yet. Will is flipping through the booklet they were given. "What do ya got for me, kid?" Henry points at his notes. "Anything you want to talk over?"

Will nods. "Yeah. The victims are all over the map. The demographics are all over the place. That's why everyone is in such a rush to close this case." Will pulls out the photos of the victims. "Any of these people could be your neighbor or your kid's teacher. It shakes people. We know there is more drug related murders in this area and there isn't a special consultant that gets involved with those cases."

"That's true. So how do we find this guy so we can get back to working on those cases?" Henry asks to get Will's train of thought back on the profile.

"Doctor Lecter has a point. I think the reason we do not have a description of the killer is that he looks like any average Joe. All of these people were lured away from busy areas, but no one saw anything or more accurately, no one saw anything out of place. But I think this guy is younger. Look at this," Will flips through the booklet that they were given and tears out the wide shot of the second crime scene. "This is a mess. Look at the broken chair and all this glass. Look at the wrists of the male victim. Wait let me. Hold on" Will flips through the booklet again before rolling his eyes and taking all of the pages from the binder. He stands up at their table and begins rearranging the photos in a way that makes sense to him. "Here it is. Look at his wrists. There are not one, not two, but three sets of ligature marks. The first ones show that he pulled against them so much, they broke skin. I think he got free. He also has bruises on his fists like he tried to fight back. Will runs his finger down one of the data sheets. "He was by far the largest victim. This guy was what, 6' 2" and 250 pounds? Yeah. He got free. Our killer got cocky after his first successful hunt. The victims in the third murder were both of a smaller build. I think this guy isn't even thirty yet and I bet he is barely bigger than me." Henry smiles as Will continues to pour over the data sheets and arrange photos. Henry glances up towards the exit to see that Doctor Lecter is hanging back and is watching and listening as Will gives his take on the case with a little grin on his face.

Henry lets Will work in silence for a few more minutes before prompting him again. "Where do we start looking? Sergeant Miller has given us the southeastern part of the grid. Where do you want to go first?"

Will pulls out the map of the crime scenes. "What is the time frame between kills?"

Henry flips through his still tidy booklet. "Between the first and the second? A week. Between the second and the third? Three weeks. It's been a week since the last one."

Will looks up and meets Henry's eyes. "He's going to do it again tonight. I feel it. He lost a little confidence after the big guy got free and gave him a run for his money, but this last one? No. It felt too good. He's going to do it again." Will looks at his watch. It is 5 o'clock now. "I don't think we can stop him from taking the next couple." He sits back down and looks over the photos as he runs a hand down his face and shakes his head a little as if he is trying to

clear it. “No. If we intervene, he will just take someone else. It’s not the victims that he cares about. It’s the act itself. We have to find the next place he is going to take them.” He looks back over the map and frowns.

Henry kneels down by Will’s chair. “Will, I know you hate it when I ask,” Henry begins but Will interrupts him.

“I know. I know. It would help though. Wouldn’t it?” Will asks, but he already knows the answer.

“Where would you take them, Will? Where would you go? Look. Really look. I am right here with you.” Henry puts a hand on his shoulder.

Will turns back to the table and closes his eyes. The pendulum swings and his skin feels tight. He is on the main strip. He can hear the neon of the sign above his head and the faint sound of jazz get louder and then quieter as the door to a bar across the street opens and then closes. The pendulum swing once more and when he opens his eyes, he is in the warehouse that was closed for repairs that the killer took the third couple. Both victims are tied to wooden chairs with electrical cords. “I need a place that is quiet, but if you get loud,” Will points a threatening finger to the woman before placing it over his lips as he steps closer to her. She is crying, but her sobs quiet down as he gets closer. Her whole body convulses with fear, but she makes no sound by the time Will runs a hand through her hair while looking at her husband. “If you decide to get loud, or more likely, if I decide to make you get loud, people may hear you, but no one would be surprised. No one will report it.” Will steps away from her but then kicks at the leg of her chair causing the woman to shriek. Will smiles at her wide enough to show his teeth. He closes his eyes and when he opens them, he is gasping in the conference room.

Henry is right next to him. His hand still tight on his shoulder. Will leans into the touch letting it ground him as he catches his breath. “We are thinking about the locations the wrong way. The place doesn’t need to be away from other people. Doesn’t need to be secluded at all. It needs to be away from people that can or would report any sounds of violence. All of the places he took them were near areas where people were displaced from Katrina. Were there homeless camps nearby?”

Henry steps away from Will and looks over at the map with a smile on his face. “Yes. Each crime scene is near a camp or in neighborhoods where we know people are staying in abandoned homes.”

“That’s where we will find him tonight. We need to search through warehouses or homes that are either abandoned or are being repaired in parts of town where people are in unstable housing situations. He counts on the fact that no one can say anything. He feeds on the fear he creates not just from the victims we see, but also from the victims he leaves behind. The ones that hear it all happen and can’t do anything about it.” Will grabs the map again and his pen and starts marking circling areas and then marking out others. “Let’s start here.” Will points to an area in their assigned area near the docks where businesses are beginning to rebuild, but they aren’t ready for the public yet.

“Are you sure? Do you want to pass the information on, or do you want to go check it out first?” Henry asks as he helps Will gather all the photos and papers that he has sprawled out during their conversation.

Will stands up and stretches before helping Henry pick everything up and organize it back into the binder with quick, jerky movements. “Let’s go. There are other people in the area as well. If we think we found something, we will call in the others. It can’t hurt right?”

Henry hears the door click quietly and he knows Doctor Lecter has just left and would probably be telling the Sergeant what he heard. If they were alone searching the area when they first got there, it wouldn’t be for long. “Ok, kid. Let’s roll.”

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

> Will and Henry search for and find their monster as Hannibal's curiosity about the young man grows.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal tries to muffle the sound of the door closing behind him as he leaves the conference room. He knows he should stop by Sergeant Miller's office. He should tell the man what he heard and where the two officers are likely going. He should, but he won't. At least not yet. He wants to give the young man a head start. Wants to see if his intriguing mind is on to something. They have a large area to search. He will give them time to nail the area down some before he alerts anyone. In the meantime, he will go about his business until he runs into the Sergeant. He will let fate decide the head start.

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"How do you want to search? Do we need to break it up and do a grid search?" Will asks Henry while he is looking at a map of the area they were assigned. He pulls out a pen and starts marking out areas and circling others.

"Looks like you have some insight on your own over there. Would you like to share?" Henry asks with a grin, taking one hand off the cruiser's steering wheel and using it to push down the map so he could look over and see Will's face. His glasses were pulled up and resting on the top of his head.

"I'm thinking either abandoned apartment buildings or motels. Somewhere he would have privacy because there is no legitimate business or people living there, but there may be people staying there out of necessity. This guy has used electrical cords cut from items found at the scene. He doesn't seem to have a kit. I want to look in this area." Will points to a large circle on the map that contains a street with old motels that have been out of commission since the storm. "But I didn't know if there was a procedure or protocol we are supposed to follow. I doubt the book says 'Will's gut.'"

"The book may not, but all the procedure guys have been chasing their tails looking for, what you believe to be, a kid. A brutal, cruel kid, but a kid nonetheless. I say we try a little nonconventional tactics. What street do you have highlighted?" Henry asks.

"Marina Road," Will says as he puts his glasses back on.

Henry wants to ask where he went just now. What caused him to put his guard up, but he knows Will will tell him if he wants. He has already pushed him so much today. Better to let him sit with his thoughts. If he was right, he would have to ask even more of him before the night is through.

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They park the car a block away from Marina Road. Henry puts the car in park and before he gets out of the vehicle he removes his service weapon and checks to make sure it is loaded and ready to go before placing it back in his holster. Will copies his movements and they exit the car.

"You think he is at this motel by the water?" Henry asks Will as they walk towards the motel.

"Yes and I can't explain why, but yes." Will's eyes are darting all around them, chasing every sound or slight movement from the wind. He is wound up tight.

"I suggest we approach quietly. If he is there, you say he likes to make some noise. We should hear him. We can call backup once we are sure." Will nods.

As they get closer to the round roofed building, Henry draws his weapon and Will mirrors him again. The sun is setting, causing a strange orange glow on the water. They keep towards the shadows and listen. The farther down the row of rooms they get without hearing or seeing anything out of place, Will feels doubt weigh heavy in his chest. Then, right before they go to double back the way they came, Will sees a flicker of movement of blinds covering one of the windows. He catches Henry's attention and points to the window. Henry walks towards Will and places a finger over his lips before gesturing for him to stop walking. They wait for another slight move of the blinds or a whisper of sound for what seems like eternity before they hear what sounds like furniture scrapping across the floor followed by a muffled sob. Will moves towards the door without thinking before Henry throws an arm out to stop him. Caution written all over his face. He motions for them to step away so they are out of earshot of the door.

"It sounds like he may be here. If not him, someone up to no good. We need to call it in. There should be others already in the area," Henry reaches for his radio and starts to call in for backup.

Will's skin feels tight again, like an ill fitting suit. The hair on his neck is standing up and he wants nothing more than to break down the door. He hasn't heard a word Henry has said into the radio. His eyes are glued to the door and his knuckles are white around his weapon.

"Are you sure? We need backup now. There is some kind of assault in progress. This may be our guy," Henry's voice is a little higher than normal. "We can't wait twenty minutes. If he realizes we are here it could be over in twenty minutes." There is a pause and then the dispatcher on the other end of the radio puts out an all hands on deck call for their location. Henry looks up at Will and places a hand on his shoulder, bringing his attention back to himself. Will's eyes flicker up to meet his. "We could have help in five minutes or twenty minutes. We don't know. I don't feel comfortable waiting, but I don't want to risk putting you in a bad situation either. I am going in there, whether you come with me is your call. What do

you say, kid? You with me?" Henry draws his weapon as he finishes his question, tipping his head up towards the motel room that they both know holds their monster. Will doesn't say anything. He closes his eyes for a moment and dips his head. When he raises his head and opens his eyes, they are hard. All the playful, soft parts of him that Henry has grown so fond of are gone. Will raises his weapon, an exact mirror of Henry's stance, and nods.

They walk towards the door in sync. Will a few paces behind Henry. He senses that the older man wants the lead. He wants to protect Will from whatever they will find behind the door that has been the center of Will's focus since they arrived at the abandoned motel. When they get to the door, Henry points to himself then to the door before raising his left hand and starting a count down starting with five fingers, mouthing the count to Will. It's dark safe for the street light behind the building and Will has to strain to see his lips. *Five*. Will feels his spine straighten. He can sense the man behind the door. It is everything he can do to wait for the count. He wants to kick the door in. *Four*. He doesn't know what he will do when he comes face to face with the monster. He tries to take in Henry's usual calming presence, but at this moment, even Henry seems pulled too tight, like every nerve ending is a livewire. Will can hear his heartbeat in his ears. *Thump thump thump*. It is distracting. Has Henry already said three? He isn't sure, but in the next moment he sees only two fingers on his hand. *Two*. Will narrows his eyes and checks the safety on his gun one more time. *One.* Will backs up a few steps to let Henry kick in the door before following behind him into the small hotel room. The only light comes from an industrial flashlight pointing upwards in the room to let the light penetrate the small area containing the table and two chairs in the room. Will looks towards the couple. They are restrained and tied to the chairs with what looks like electrical cords and strips of bedding. The man has some blood on his face, mostly around his nose, like he was punched in the face. The woman looks mostly unscathed. Tear tracks and mascara trail down her face, but no blood, at least from what Will can see in his quick glance. Will can still hear his heartbeat. They have only been in the room for three beats before Henry announces, "New Orleans Police Department. Put down your weapon."

Will whirls around to see their monster. He was right. The man is in his mid-twenties. He has slightly sun kissed skin, brown hair, and hazel eyes. The only remarkable things about his appearance was the fact he was able to get his second male victim subdued again after he got through his bindings. This kid is not physically imposing. His body is lean, mostly muscles and bone. He holds his body like a predator, slightly leaned forward, muscles tight. Will assumes he must be stronger than he looks. His eyes flicker to the man's hand to see his knuckles bloody and his fingers curled tight around a knife. The blade glints even in the low light. Will looks back up to meet his eyes, gun still drawn and pointed at the young man. A man barely older than himself. He feels the urge to attack. The fear in the room both of being caught from the killer and being killed coming from his intended victims is thick in the air, like another entity in the room. The internal struggle between fight, flight, and fear is suffocating for Will.

The room isn't very big and Will has been inching towards the man with the knife as Henry tries to stay between him and Will. "Drop the weapon. It's over." Henry calls out to the man again. In his effort to get between Will and their monster, he gets within arm's reach. The young man lunges and cuts Henry's arm with his knife. Crimson blood drips from the blade, the smell hits the air and without thinking about it, Will squeezes the trigger. Screams fill the room from all around him. He can't tell where they are coming from. They mix with the

sound of sirens from the road that are getting closer and the steady *thump* of his heartbeat still pounding in his ears. His whole body feels like it is on fire. He looks down to see the monster, now just a kid slumped against the wall. The bullet went through his leg. From his limited knowledge of anatomy, it missed anything vital, but a steady trail of blood pools around the hole in his jeans and runs down his leg, seeping into the matted carpet. He closes the distance between them and kicks the knife away from him and fights the urge to kneel beside him and watch him bleed out. "You ok, kid?" Henry asks, trying to shake Will out of what looks to be shock. He leans against the other wall, applying pressure to the wound on his upper arm.

Will shakes his head a bit to clear it. He reaches for his handcuffs and cuffs the man before hurrying over to Henry. "Yes. Are you ok? Is it bad?" His hands flutter around Henry's like he wants to touch him. To help him. Henry notices that Will's glasses are slightly askew and the hard look in his eyes has thawed slightly at the sight of Henry hurt.

Henry chuckles a bit, "I am going to be fine. It's a long way from the heart. Check on them. I can hear the cavalry." And Will can too. It sounds like they are in the parking lot now.

Will walks over to the couple, still tied to the motel chairs. Their fear is still palpable. It makes Will's hands shake slightly, but he is sure they will not notice. He unties the woman first and, as soon as she is free, she throws herself into him, wrapping her arms around his neck. "Thank you. Thank you so much. I thought he was going to kill us," she says through full body sobs. Will puts on arm around her to steady her before pulling away and untying her partner.

Uniformed officers enter the room and Will melts away from the commotion towards Henry as he tells them a quick version of what happened. Once the people in the room start to take the couple and the handcuffed man towards the parking lot for medical attention, Will and Henry follow. "You need to get that looked at," Will says, nodding towards the older man's arm.

"They have their hands full at the moment. I'll be ok." Henry shrugs, but then looks over at Will, pointedly, trying to meet his eyes. Will acts like he doesn't notice before Henry stops walking and places the hand of his uninjured arm on Will's shoulder. "You did good, kid. You didn't hesitate. You kept your head in the game and we all made it out." His smile is proud. Will tries to let it warm him. "Are you ok?"

"I'm fine," he answers quickly. "He didn't get close enough."

"That's not what I'm talking about. It was rather heavy in there. Hell, even I could feel it. Are you ok?"

"Yes. I mean," Will pauses, taking a breath, "I will be. I can keep it together through all this." He points to the absolute bedlam they are walking towards. There are half a dozen cop cars, several ambulances, loads of onlookers, and even more uniformed officers milling around the parking lot. Not to mention, the flash of cameras from journalists, eager to report that the danger is finally over.

Henry squeezes his shoulder and continues walking towards the mess. They see Sergeant Miller talking to Doctor Lecter and Henry steers them their way. Once in front of Sergeant Miller, he closes the distance and claps both men on the back. “Good work, gentlemen. Excellent. How did you know he would be here?” He looks towards Henry who grins and points to Will.

“Once the briefing was over, we took some time to go over the information together and Will put the pieces together. It was truly something to witness. Not easy to ignore.” Will sees Henry’s eyes flicker to the Doctor and feels an edge in his words. Hannibal’s eyes narrow at Henry just a fraction, but other than that one micro-expression, he is the very definition of calm observer. “Once we figured out he was here, we came up with a plan to apprehend him and minus a small setback, it went smoothly.” At the mention of the setback both the men look at Henry’s arm which still trickles blood down his bicep and forearm, though it has slowed.

“When were you going to mention that? Let’s get you looked at.” Sergeant Miller walks towards Henry and stated guiding him towards the closest ambulance. Before they are out of earshot, he turns towards Will who is looking slightly over his shoulder. “Great work, kid. You handled yourself well tonight. No major injuries to the hostages and our man is alive to answer for what he has done. Not to mention you found him in a few hours when we have been running around for months.” He says the last part with exasperation before smiling gently at Will. “You have a bright future ahead. I am going to take Henry to get what looks like some stitches. Hang around for a bit if you don’t mind. Just in case anyone else has any questions.” Will nods and pushes his glasses back into place on the bridge of his nose.

Once Henry and Sergeant Miller walk away, Hannibal steps closer to Will. “Not fond of eye contact are you?”

Will looks over towards Hannibal and shakes his head. “Eyes are distracting. You see too much. You don’t see enough.” His words trail off and he runs a hand through his curls, shaking his head.

An amused smirk twists Hannibal’s mouth as his eyes finally capture Will’s for a moment before the younger man’s eyes settle on his chin instead. Hannibal can’t help himself and steps even closer to Will, breaking the little bubble of personal space the younger man tries to maintain with the people around him at all times. “How did you really find Mister Laurent?” Hannibal asks in just above a whisper nodding towards the ambulance that holds their suspected killer.

Will wants to back away. He wants to walk over to where Henry is getting patched up. His mind is telling him that there is something off about the strange man. Dark, maybe even dangerous. But he is curious. He can’t quite get a full read on the man. Their interaction is a challenge of sorts and it has been a very long time since Will has felt challenged. Most people are easy to read and he can generally tell how his choices and words during a conversation will be received, what he does with that information may vary, but Hannibal’s emotions and tells are locked up tight. A puzzle. “Don’t you know? Henry mentioned there should be uniforms in the area. He seemed almost sure of it. You listened to our conversation.” It isn’t a question. Will fights back a teasing grin and shifts his body to face Hannibal before adding,

“Did you enjoy the show?” If he was going to be challenged, he would face it head on. He figured Hannibal would react better to that in the very least.

Hannibal’s smirk turns into a wicked grin and he reaches towards Will as one would a stray animal, with slow, obvious movements. He removes Will’s glasses, folds them, and places them in Will’s chest pocket. Will doesn’t move to stop him, merely narrows his eyes and cocks an eyebrow in question and bemusement. “I did. Very much. How long have you known of your empathy disorder?”

Will’s expression quickly changes to shock for the briefest of moments before he gets it under control. Of course Doctor Lecter would make that jump. He is a psychiatrist. How many have Will met with in the past who couldn’t wait to pop the hood and see what makes his engine tick. There would be no point in denying it. “I always knew I could see and feel the world differently. At first, the doctors thought it was a form of autism. When I was around twelve, a psychiatrist diagnosed me. Too many mirror neurons.” Will waves his hand vaguely at his head and in doing so, realizes that they are still standing very close to each other. The other people at the scene have left a bubble of space around them. It’s almost intimate. That point driven home by the fact that, since Hannibal removed his glasses, Will has been making direct eye contact with him. The doctor’s amber eyes boring a hole in Will as if he can lift the answers straight from his mind. *Hell*, Will thinks, *he may as well be*. He can’t stop the next words from escaping, moving past a simple answer to his question and on to a confession of sorts. “Sometimes I tell people I’m on the spectrum. It keeps them from asking too many questions and lowers the expectation for eye contact and social interaction.” Hannibal had noticed that. The Sergeant didn’t expect Will to give the report. He didn’t find it odd that Henry was the mouthpiece of the team.

“You don’t seem to be having an issue now. See something that has caught your attention?” Hannibal’s accent wraps around the words a little stronger, adding to the smoothness. Will’s only response is to look away from Hannibal and towards the ambulance finally pulling away with their tourist killer inside. Hannibal follows his eye line to see him looking towards the ambulance. “I took a look at the gunshot wound. He will need surgery, but the wound is not life threatening. He will make a full recovery.” Hannibal waits a moment before adding, “Was this the first time you fired your service weapon?”

Will looks away from the taillights of the ambulance and back at Hannibal. “Yes.”

“How did it feel?” Hannibal asks in the same whisper as before, as if this is their secret.

Will’s eyes flicker away before he quickly says, “Scary.”

Hannibal lets out a quiet chuckle. “Try again, dear boy. How did it feel? Or rather, how did you feel?”

Will senses the darkness around Hannibal as though it is reaching out to him. It’s still just in the background. Nothing concrete. Will’s mind races as he thinks how to answer the question. He felt exhilarated. The blood pouring from the hole in Luke Laurent’s leg caused goosebumps to raise on his arms. He wanted to push his finger into the wound to hear the man scream again once the shock set in and his screams had turned to whimpers. Even though his mind raced at the time, his heart was steady. He could hear it in his ears and feel it

in every part of his body. Will looks back at Hannibal and realizes that, while he has been following this train of thought, his chest is heaving, pulling air into his lungs in sharp, though quiet, gasps. He bypasses the answer this time and goes straight to the confession. “I feel like I wish I was a better shot.”

They are way to close at this point, almost sharing breath. At Will’s confession, Hannibal takes a deep breath, tasting the air, savoring the moment and slowly pulls away. “Where would one go to grab a drink after a particularly taxing day?” Hannibal asks with a crooked grin.

Will shakes his head, returning the smile. “This is New Orleans. If you stand on the street for too long, someone will offer you a drink.”

Hannibal straightens up and Will mirrors his movements, almost like they are magnets affected by each other’s pull. “What if I wanted particular company?” Hannibal tilts his head to the younger man a fraction. Will can still feel the darkness from the man wrapping around him and he makes the mistake of looking up into the taller man’s amber eyes.

“Um,” Will stumbles for a moment and then answers his unspoken question. “Jim’s Bar. It’s a dive near my house. I stop by there to knock back a few when I need to unwind or shake off something I’ve seen out here.”

“Sounds charming.” Hannibal moves back from Will, smoothing his suit jacket. “I may see you there later?” With that, Hannibal dips his head and turns to walk away before Will can answer or even say goodbye.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all for your patience and for taking the time to read this story. <3<3<3

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Will heads to his favorite dive bar to calm his nerves and runs into an unexpected but not unwelcome drinking buddy.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will seeks out his Sargent to make sure he has spoken with everyone he needs to and he has signed off on all the paperwork.

“You can complete your report in the morning, son.” His Sargent says, clapping him on the back. Will clenches his teeth together. “You did good work tonight. I don’t think you will be in that uniform too much longer if you play your cards right.” And with that, he is dismissed for the night.

The drive home is a blur. Will tells himself he isn’t going to the bar. When he arrives home, walks directly to his bathroom and starts stripping off his clothes, he tells himself he is only taking a shower because he is sweaty and quite certain there is blood on him. He jumps into the shower and turns the water to just below scalding, standing under the hot spray, letting the heat and pressure work some of the knots in his back.

His thoughts keep trailing back to Doctor Lecter. He knew that after today, he would be gone. He was only helping consult with this case. He would be lying if he said he wasn’t taken by him. *How odd,* Will thinks to himself. He doesn’t get “taken” by people. With his empathy disorder, he can figure out someone’s motives quite easily, but with Hannibal, he seems to genuinely enjoy Will’s reactions and responses. He doesn’t want to dig into his head for a paper or clinical curiosity. At least not yet. Their brief conversation left Will intrigued. The slightly amused turn up of his lips made Will want to keep talking. Keep reacting. He didn’t feel like he needed to dumb himself down or pretend not to notice things in order to stay in the conversation. It also didn’t hurt that Doctor Lecter is a beautiful man. No one could deny that fact. He turns the temperature of the water from hot to just the comfortable side of freezing.

He washes his hair and body thoroughly. When he is done in the shower, he wipes the fog from the mirror with a hand towel and runs his fingers through his curls, trying to tame them. Not because he is going anywhere, because he isn’t, but because if he doesn’t try to tame his hair now, it’ll be a mess later. *Right.*

He pulls on a black pocket tee and dark wash jeans with slightly shaking hands. A drink may do his nerves some good. He will go to Jim’s and get one drink and come home. Simple. He

runs his hand over his face, wondering if he should shave before shaking his head and reaching for his boots with a sigh. He laces them up and walks towards the door grabbing his keys and wallet from the wooden bowl before turning off the lights and heading out into the night.

A light breeze blows over his face. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath, letting the smell of the water soothe his nerves as he walks towards the road. He enjoys Jim's bar because it is within walking distance of his little boat house. On nights he has a few too many, he can always stumble home. It doesn't hurt that it is far enough from the precinct and the main strip that he doesn't run into many people other than the older fishermen that are also his neighbors.

When he reaches the bar, he hesitates before pushing the door open. What if Hannibal isn't there? He knows it shouldn't bother him. He is here for a drink to calm his nerves, or at least that is his excuse to himself, but his shoulders slump slightly at the thought. He could still have a drink or possibly more than one in that scenario. Worse, what if Hannibal is there? What does he want to happen? What does Hannibal want to happen? Should he sit in his normal spot? Should he be presumptuous and sit next to Hannibal without asking? What if he just wanted to know about a place to drink and wasn't asking to meet him in the first place? *Get a hold of yourself*. Worst case, he will grab a drink or two to unwind before he falls into his bed. Best case, he grabs a drink with the dark and mysterious doctor with the sharp cheekbones and then. What? What did he want? Will takes a deep breath to steady himself and pushes the door open.

The bar is almost empty except for the regulars. His corner at the main bar is empty except for a tall man with broad shoulders and sharp cheekbones. The corner of his mouth twitches. *Well that answers that,* he thinks to himself, *I get to sit in my usual spot and be presumptuous.* Will pulls out the stool beside Hannibal and waves to Jim behind the bar. The older man puts down the glass he is washing and reaches for one from the shelf. He places it in front of Will and pours him a few fingers of whiskey. "Heard what you did today, kid. This one's on me," he says as he slides the glass to Will and tips his head.

"Thank you," Will says, cheeks blushing as he looks up at Jim, not quite meeting his eyes. He glances at the television above the bar. Jim has it turned to the local news. The reporter is standing in the parking lot of the abandoned hotel Will left not even two hours ago. When Jim follows Will's eye line to the screen, he turns the station to reruns of an old black and white sitcom. Will dips his head towards the older man in appreciation.

Hannibal's head tilts towards Will, but he doesn't say anything. He brings his own glass to his lips as Will fidgets before getting a hold of himself. What does he have to lose? If he makes a fool out of himself, who cares. He will probably never see this man again. He doesn't even know what he wants any way other than, whatever happens, he doesn't want to regret anything.

Will takes a swig of his whisky, wincing a bit at the familiar burn in his throat, then turns to face Hannibal. "Fancy seeing you here." His blue eyes shine even in the dingy light of the dive bar.

Hannibal grins. His eyes show a flicker of emotion Will can't place before it is gone. "I heard from an excellent source that this is the place to go if you want to shake something off." He turns to look at Will and his smile is wide now, with the slightest glimpse of teeth. Will notices that they aren't quite straight and feels a strange sense of comfort that not everything about the man is perfect. Will returns his smile and feels some of the stiffness in his shoulders relax. "I will say, I thought I was in the wrong place at first. This looks like a house from the outside."

Will chuckles before taking another sip from his drink. "It is a house. Jim has a fully functional kitchen back there and he lives above the garage. He can't technically sell food due to state laws and all that, but if you show up on Monday nights, you may end up with a bowl of gumbo in front of you."

"Interesting. I find myself wishing it were Monday." Hannibal looks up and notices that Jim is on the other end of the bar, purposefully giving the two men privacy. The others in the small dive are sitting by the window looking out at the people milling around outside. While the bar, or rather, house, is small, it is very clean and comfortable. The stools are padded and the lights are dim enough that it feels like dinner time in a restaurant. It is easy to feel as though Hannibal and Will are the only two people there.

"How long are you in New Orleans? Maybe gumbo is in your future after all." Will says as he finishes his drink and waves towards Jim for another but as the man gets closer he tells him not to rush. He knows Hannibal was only brought in for this case, but part of him wouldn't put it past the crafty doctor to manufacture another reason to stay. Part of him, a quiet part that is getting louder, wishes he would.

"Only until the morning. Early flight. It seems my consultation is no longer needed," he cocks an eyebrow at Will, "so I will be heading back to Baltimore. I hope you don't mind me saying so, but I was very impressed by how you laid out the case. Very perceptive. You saw things that others either did not or could not see."

Jim walks over to the men and refills Will's glass and silently asks Hannibal if he needs anything. He nods and Jim brings him another glass of wine from a bottle Will has seen behind the bar since he started frequenting the dive over a year ago. Will tilts his head to the side and moves his gaze from Hannibal's chin to his eyes. "Which one were you?"

Hannibal blinks and tilts his head slightly. "Pardon?"

"Did you not see or *could* you not see? Or maybe there is a third option," Will says, still looking Hannibal in the eyes. They stay like that for a moment, still besides their breathing until Hannibal's lip twitches and the corner of his eyes crinkle.

"How insightful you are. It is astonishing how much you can see without your glasses." He says the last part with a smirk, turning back to his drink and towards the bar. Will pats the pocket of his shirt to realize that he didn't even bring them with him when he left for the evening.

Will mirrors the doctor's movements and turns back to his whisky, the tension diffusing for a moment. "They aren't prescription, but I know you know that already." He runs a hand

through his slightly damp curls. “It can be a lot sometimes. It is easier to block some of it with the glasses. It’s distracting, like I said before.”

“How so?” Hannibal asks, the fire of curiosity burning in his amber eyes.

Will chuckles. “Are you asking for another demonstration, Doctor? Two shows in one day? The first one was free. The second may cost you.” He feels a little looser, though he knows it is not all the whiskey. He felt similarly when they spoke in the parking lot. The darkness around Hannibal is there again, reaching out to Will, wrapping him in the warmth, whispering to him. Hannibal’s grin turns into a true smile that lights up his eyes further and he looks positively devilish.

“I will take only what you are willing to give at whatever cost you deem appropriate, but I think you like the performance. At least a little.” His posture overall looks impassive, but Will can feel his excitement.

He thinks about it for a moment before he shrugs. “When the audience is right, maybe,” Will says as a confirmation. They have been leaning towards each other subconsciously and now share a posture of two men huddled together telling secrets in a dark corner.

“Why don’t we make the audience the subject as well. Look at me, Will,” Hannibal’s accent wraps around his name like a caress, but the statement is a command and Will cannot help but obey. His eyes shoot up to meet the amber eyes of the doctor, the same color as the whiskey occupying the glass in his slightly sweating hand. “Tell me what you see.”

Will continues to look into his eyes. The silence stretches between them, and while it is not uncomfortable, it is tense. He clears his throat and rolls his shoulders. “Apart from the obvious things. You are well educated, probably studied abroad as well as here in the states. You have money. I would argue family money, but you know what it is like to go without.” Hannibal cocks an eyebrow at that and Will explains. “While your suits are,” he pauses for a moment to find the right word before settling on “extravagant. All of your necessities, while expensive, have a practicality to them. Your shoes look handmade but the soles on them have a thick tread. They will last. Even though they are dress shoes, you can wear them for multiple purposes. If they were the only shoe you had, it wouldn’t be too much of a hardship. Plus, even though I am sure you have had better wine, you savor each sip from your glass as though it will be your last. Like it will be taken from you.” Hannibal nods his head slightly in agreement and encouragement for Will to continue.

“You have a darkness about you, but it doesn’t share the characteristics typically tied to the dark. It’s not cold. You wear it like a cloak around yourself. It keeps you warm and safe. Maybe even took the place of a person or circumstance that used to make you feel that way.” While Hannibal is still technically making eye contact with Will, his eyes have a slightly glassy look to them. He isn’t fully at the bar anymore. When Will sees the look clear he continues on. “I do not find it to be unwelcoming. On the contrary, I feel it like it’s reaching out to me. As if it conforms around us to create an environment in which I can’t seem to quit confessing things to you.” Will says the last part with a shake of his head and a grin pulling at his lips, breaking the eye contact and the spell as he finishes the rest of his drink before placing it on the bar a little rougher than he originally meant to, but he continues to grip the

empty glass. He isn't this guy. He isn't the type of person to spill to a stranger no matter how charming. No matter how attractive. But something in him looks at Hannibal and sees its kin.

There is a brief moment of silence in which Hannibal only looks at Will appreciatively, like he is studying a piece of art that he is particularly fond of. His features soften slightly as he says, "What a truly cunning boy you are." Hannibal places his empty wine glass back on the bar and his fingers brush Will's sending a jolt of electricity through them both. "You are not afraid of the dark?" he asks, but it is not really a question. It's what drew Hannibal to Will in the first place and if Will is being honest with himself, it's what brought him to the bar.

Will huffs a laugh before saying, "Given time you would find it is plenty dark up here all on its own."

"Hmm. I do wish we had more time. I would enjoy hearing more of your dark confessions." The devilish look in his eye is back and to Will's embarrassment, he feels a flush warm his cheeks.

"Only if you share a few of your own. I feel that there is an unfair exchange in that department." Hannibal tilts his head in question. Will clarifies, speaking in the flowing cadence of the doctor, "at whatever cost you deem appropriate."

"Where to begin," Hannibal says more to himself than to Will. Jim looks over and wordlessly asks if they want another round. Both men shake their head before turning back towards each other. "The other men in your unit underestimate you. They see you as weak and lacking experience." Hannibal pauses before amending his statement. "No. Not weak. Soft. They feel that you are soft, and I think you let them believe this, though you know it is not true."

Will's expression does not change as he tries to mirror the impassive expression the doctor had as he underwent Will's examination. Hannibal takes that as an invitation to continue.

"I think some of that soft persona slipped away tonight. The others thought you were toughening up, but it has always been there. Hasn't it? When you looked down at Luke what did you see? What did you want to do if you had been alone?"

Will takes a shuttering breath. But doesn't say anything for a long moment. When he realizes that Hannibal is content to sit in the silence until he answers, no matter how long it takes, Will takes a steadying breath before saying, "I imagined putting my finger into the wound, pushing the bullet deeper. Pulling away my hand after it was covered in his blood." He shakes his head. "But this isn't supposed to be my confession. It's supposed to be yours, Doctor Lecter."

"I'm getting to it. You are quite impatient," Hannibal says with an indulgent look on his face. "Did it frighten you? When you realized what you would have done had you been alone?"

"I felt like there must be a monster in me," Will says with a far away look in his eye.

Hannibal leans in further until their shoulders are touching and places a hand lightly on Will's knee, gentle as a breath before whispering into his ear, "I would have licked the blood from your hands." He feels the shiver that rolls through Will's body at the closeness and his words

and Will turns to look him dead on and the devil is in his eyes once again. “What does that make me?”

Will doesn’t know what to say, but his breathing has become ragged and he would feel embarrassed if he could remember how to. Hannibal is patient as he waits for Will’s reply, hand still on his leg as he did not move away from the contact. “Maybe you have a monster too. Or you could just be hungry,” Will adds the last part as a way to make it a joke. To give the doctor an out if he chooses to take it.

Hannibal chuckles quietly and squeezes Will’s knee. “Oh, dear boy, I am positively ravenous.” He removes his hand and straightens his posture to give Will room to collect his thoughts before adding, “But that was only one real confession. Here is another.” Will looks towards him as he says, “I want to absolutely devour you.” He says the words as if they are fact. As if Will asked him for he time and he read it from his watch.

Will feels as though the air in his lungs and the bar has evaporated. He isn’t sure what expression shows on his face in the moment, only that it seems to amuse the doctor. Hannibal adjusts his glass on the coaster and turns it so that the edges of the coaster align with the wood grain of the bar before he looks back to Will who still hasn’t been able to school his expression into something other than shock. “Have I broken you, darling?” Hannibal asks with a curious tilt to his head.

Whether it was the question or the endearment, Will isn’t sure, but it is enough for his brain to catch up with his body. He shakes his head to clear it and chuckles. “Nice try, but I’m afraid it takes more than that to break me.” Will cannot remember the last time he smiled so much, but the one that makes its way to his face shows teeth and his eyes have narrowed. He looks hungry and curious. He swears he hears a low rumble of a growl coming from Hannibal’s chest.

“I would love to find out,” Hannibal says and he watches Will’s breathing speed up and his pupils dilate. He thinks for a moment and makes a decision. Hannibal leans closer again, their shoulders brushing and his lips close to the shell of his ear as he moves his hand from the bar to place it on Will’s thigh this time. Will can feel the heat from his hand through his jeans, as if he is touching his bare skin and he tries, unsuccessfully, to hold back a shiver. Hannibal’s warm breath ghosts past his ear as he reaches into his suit jacket pocket and pulls out his wallet. “Shall we finish this conversation somewhere more private?” Will is already on his feet, fumbling for his own wallet. “Allow me,” Hannibal says before tossing a few bills on the bar, enough to cover both of their tabs and a generous tip. Will doesn’t argue, merely taps his pockets to make sure he has everything he came in with. He waves to Jim and the two men walk out of the bar.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all for your patience. I'm really excited to get back into this story. Hope you all enjoy it.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal go back to Will's place to... get better acquainted with each other's darkness.

Chapter Notes

We have made it to the smut. Big hugs and thank you's to urheartismypinata for helping me get the smut just right.
Please be mindful of the tags as they have changed. There is some breathplay and blood. All of it is consensual. Enjoy!

As soon as the door of the bar shuts behind them, Will pushes Hannibal against the side of the building and kisses him roughly. He doesn't know what has come over him, but he has promised himself he wouldn't hold back from what he wanted. No regrets. And the thought of not feeling Hannibal's lips against his, not feeling the man's broad shoulders under his own calloused hands in this moment is almost painful. If he is rejected, at least it would be for being himself in the moment.

Hannibal does not reject him. On the contrary, he pulls him closer by his hips until Will's entire body is pressed against his. He places one hand in his curly hair, keeping the other hand tight on Will's hip. Will makes a strangled sound in the back of his throat at the feel of Hannibal's fingertips digging bruises into his hip and his nails leaving crescent shaped marks. He runs his tongue over his bottom lip, asking for entrance. Hannibal welcomes him and they deepen the kiss, tongues gliding over each other as they explore each other's mouths. After a few moments, Will pulls away slightly. "I have wanted to do that all night," he says, placing a kiss to Hannibal's neck. "I live just down the street. We could walk?" Will phrases it as a question in case Hannibal isn't comfortable going to his house, in case the doctor wants to end this here, but Hannibal nods and releases his grip on him. Will turns towards the road and reaches his hand behind him for Hannibal to take without looking at Hannibal's reaction. Trusting he will interlock his fingers with his own. Hannibal isn't sure why, but he feels a slight flip in his stomach as he takes the young man's out stretched hand. It's such a trusting gesture, to walk to his house, hand in hand, in public, for all to see.

It's only a ten minute walk and when they get to the dock Will stops, turning to see Hannibal's reaction. The doctor smiles. "You have a houseboat." It's not a question and he smiles at the little house swaying gently in the water.

Will is a little nervous and he uses his free hand to run through his unruly curls. “Yeah. I’ve lived on or near the water my whole life.” He pauses, but keeps going, wanting Hannibal to know him. “It’s the only time I feel truly at ease.” Will looks towards the little white houseboat with a smile on his face. The lights in the front room are on and it looks like a beacon in the dark night.

Hannibal closes the distance between them to place a kiss on Will’s neck and squeezes his hand. “Do I get to see the inside?” When Will turns his head to respond, Hannibal takes Will’s bottom lip into his mouth for a moment before releasing it with a slight popping sound. A shiver runs through Will.

“Yes,” escapes his lips as little more than a whisper as he fumbles for his keys. He gets the door unlocked and Hannibal follows him inside. It is tidier than Hannibal expected. The small space is well utilized. Everything has a place, but Hannibal can tell that Will spends most of his time at the small desk in the corner that is full of metal parts. From the looks of it, he is rebuilding a motor, maybe multiple motors.

Will drops his keys and wallet into the large wooden bowl by the door, walking over to the kitchen counter. He pulls two glasses from the cabinet. Before calling over his shoulder, “Would you like a drink?” He doesn’t realize that Hannibal has already slipped off his shoes and is standing right behind him.

“No, thank you. I would rather have more of this.” Hannibal presses himself against Will’s back placing kisses to the nape of his neck causing him to shiver again.

Will turns around quickly, drinks all but forgotten. His hands tangle in Hannibal’s ash blond hair. He pulls his face to his and their lips meet again. This kiss is just as hungry and it isn’t long before tongues and teeth get involved. Hannibal’s hands find their way back to Will’s hips and he squeezes tight before lifting the younger man to sit on the counter, knocking the glasses aside with the unmistakable sound of them shattering. Neither of them look to check.

Will squeezes his thighs around Hannibal, grinding against him as they continue to devour each other’s mouths. He removes his hands from Hannibal’s hair and begins unbuttoning his suit jacket. Once his jacket is unbuttoned, Hannibal removes it and tosses it to one of the chairs in the living room while Will continues the effort with the rest of the layers. Once the vest is hanging off the doctor’s shoulders, Will pulls away from his mouth just enough to growl in frustration. He slides his fingers between the buttons of his shirt and pulls. The sound of buttons popping off their threads and rolling around the floor echoes around the room and Hannibal looks up at Will with an indulgent look on his face. “Impatient are we?” Hannibal asks.

“You’re lucky I didn’t tear the vest too. Who wears a three-piece suit to New Orleans in June?” Will asks before moving his mouth back to Hannibal’s neck and grazing his teeth along his pulse point, sliding the ruined shirt off his shoulders and then tangling his fingers in his tuft of chest hair before giving it a teasing tug.

Hannibal chuckles darkly, close to Will’s ear. “Turnabout is fair play then, yes?” Before Will realizes what he is doing, Hannibal pulls at a small hole in his t-shirt with enough strength to tear the shirt in half, exposing Will’s smooth chest. Will stares at him in wide eyed shock and

chokes back any embarrassing words that want to escape his lips. He tugs tighter on Hannibal's chest hair earning a groan from the doctor. Hannibal leans forward and runs his tongue over Will's exposed collarbones before sucking a mark just below the left one and thrusts hard against Will with enough force that he splays his hand out behind him for balance.

He hisses in pain as his palm lands in the pile of broken glass. At the sound, Hannibal's doctor instincts kick in and he takes his hand in both of his and looks at the wound. After a quick inspection, he says, "It looks clean. Luckily there is no glass in the wound. Let me bandage this up for you," he says before turning towards the sink to clean off the wound.

Will shakes his head, watching the blood trickle from the slash in his palm and run down his wrist, chest still heaving from their hungry kisses. He takes a deep breath, bites his lower lip, and looks at Hannibal with lust blown eyes before slowly raising his hand to the doctor's mouth, silently asking. Hannibal meets his gaze and, upon realizing what Will wants, smiles his devilish smile, showing his teeth. He brings Will's arm to his mouth and licks the blood trailing down his wrist. He closes his eyes at the sweet taste and hums as Will cups his bleeding palm around his cheek, tracing his cheekbone with his thumb. It is both sweet and possessive as the move marks Hannibal with more of his blood. Hannibal can feel his heartbeat in his fingertips. He has to have this man now.

Hannibal wraps his arms around Will's waist and pulls him off the counter, encouraging Will to wraps his legs around him. "Bed?" he asks, breathless.

"Bed," Will agrees and points to the back room and wraps his arms around Hannibal's neck, making sure to smear more blood on his throat. A rumble builds in his chest and he tightens his grip on Will's waist.

When they reach the bed, Hannibal tosses Will onto it with enough force he bounces. Will runs a hand through his curls to push them out of his face and looks up at Hannibal. He doesn't even look human. His pupils are blown wide, his teeth are bared in a feral grin, and Will's blood covers his lips, chin, and neck. This sight alone takes Will's breath away. He manages to glance down and notice that he is removing his pants and underwear, baring more of his golden skin and muscled body. Will licks his lips and reaches for the man standing above him. Hannibal grabs him by the ankle and pulls him down the bed as Will fumbles with the button on his jeans. When he finally gets the button undone, Hannibal tugs his pants off, bringing his boxers with them and exposing his painfully hard cock. Will starts to unconsciously curl into himself, in an attempt to hide his naked body from Hannibal's piercing stare.

"Do not hide. Not from me," Hannibal growls and climbs onto the bed, sliding his body over Will's as he kisses his way up his chest, throat, and finally his lips. To Will's embarrassment, he lets out a high pitched whine when he tastes his blood on Hannibal's lips. Hannibal thrusts his hips to grind his hard length against the man writhing beneath him. He wants to see how much teasing Will can take before he snaps. He runs his hand over Will's chest and up to the side of his neck only to slide it to his throat. He pulls away just enough to tilt his head and watch the look on his face when he tightens his grip, not cutting off his airflow completely, but enough that Will is gasping for shallow breaths.

Hannibal is not disappointed. Shock flits across Will's features and when Hannibal tightens his grip even more, his eyes roll back and he feels a rumble against the palm of his hand. He notices the tensing of Will's thighs too late before the smaller man has flipped them. In the shuffle, Hannibal slackens his grip enough that Will shakes free of the hold on his throat and is straddling the doctor's hips.

He is a vision. Will's pale skin is dotted with blood from the cut on his hand. His hair is a wild halo of curls around his slightly soft face. His eyes, however, are another story. There is nothing soft about the look he gives the man beneath him. Hannibal thinks he must look like an avenging angel sent to Earth, bent on destruction. He would consider it an honor to be destroyed by this beautiful creature.

Will leans over to the bedside table and grasps a bottle of lubricant from the top drawer. He opens the cap and squirts a liberal amount on his fingers. For a moment, Hannibal tenses, expecting to feel slick fingers between his legs. It is not something he allows often, but he is curious to see what Will is planning. He knows he would let him if he moved in that direction.

To Hannibal's surprise, Will reaches behind himself to run a single finger over his own entrance. After a few moments, he presses the finger inside and gasps, free hand reaching out and Hannibal grabs his hand, interlocking their fingers, and pulls him down on top of him so he can kiss Will as he fingers himself open. Hannibal reaches down with his free hand and teases Will's opening with a single finger. He pulls back slightly, locking eyes with Will for permission. Will nods his head and gasps as Hannibal slides one of his fingers alongside his own. Hannibal hooks the finger and knows he brushes his prostate when Will's mouth goes slack and he moans. Hannibal pulls him closer to suck a bruise on his throat as he thrusts up so Will's leaking cock slides along his, pulling another moan from the man over him. Will adds another finger and the two of them stretch his opening as he ruts against their hands and Hannibal's cock until the stretch is no longer painful and is only pleasure.

Will removes his fingers and Hannibal does the same. He pushes himself up so he is looking down at Hannibal. His hair is mussed and his face and chest are smeared with Will's blood. The predator roils just below the surface. Will can feel it as he runs his hand over Hannibal's chest before tugging on the hair there. "I want you inside me. Now. I want you so deep I can't breathe."

The predator smiles up at Will and he feels as Hannibal reaches behind him to lube and line up the thick head of his cock to his entrance. Once he is lined up, he places his hands back on Will's hips, keeping the man from pushing down. "Only if I can see the look on your face when I do this," Will tilts his head in question right before Hannibal thrusts up and pushes Will down so he is fully sheathed in one thrust. Hannibal lets out a low rumble of satisfaction from the feeling of finally being in Will's tight, wet heat and the mix between a scream and a moan that is ripped from Will's throat.

Will's eyes roll back again and he takes a moment to get used to the feeling before working himself up Hannibal's length until it is barely inside and then dropping back down again and again. He keeps up a punishing pace and reaches down to tangle his hand in Hannibal's hair

and pull him up, easing his pace only so Hannibal can sit up so they are chest to chest. Hannibal obliges and continues to touch and kiss every part of Will he can. Will pushes himself down so Hannibal is fully sheathed inside him and grinds. He grabs one of Hannibal's hands and puts it on his stomach before grinding down even harder, eyes half lidded. "Do you feel that? Can you feel this?" he asks in a breathless whisper.

"Yes," Hannibal answers back, voice raspy and deep, closer to a growl than not. "Does it hurt?"

Will looks up at him from underneath his lashes and makes eye contact. He continues to work himself on Hannibal's cock before saying, "Yes. It hurts, but you want it to hurt." He moves his hand away from Hannibal's and tangles both in the doctor's hair, bringing their faces closer so neither can look away. "You want to hurt me. To see what I'll do." He drops himself down hard again. "You're curious. Even now." Will pulls away enough to kiss the side of Hannibal's neck and run his tongue down to where his neck and shoulder meet. Hannibal's hands have moved back to his hip and hair. Tangling his fingers in the curls, not tugging, just enjoying the silky softness of the strands on his fingers as he is ridden with abandon. "But you miscalculated." Hannibal makes a questioning sound as he kisses Will's collarbone and Will kisses his shoulder. "Yeah. You did. You didn't think I would have the same curiosity," and without warning he bites down on Hannibal's shoulder until he tastes copper and feels the wetness burst along his tongue.

The hand in his hair tightens and instinctively pulls him back and Will has to unclamp his jaw from Hannibal's shoulder to avoid doing severe damage. There is blood in his teeth and on his lips. Hannibal still has an ironclad grip on his hair as he pulls the smaller man off of him. Will crawls backwards off his hips until he reaches the edge of the bed. He puts his feet down to the floor and backs away, keeping his eyes locked with Hannibal and all he sees is the darkness he had only felt earlier. Hannibal follows him off the bed, stands up, and rolls his shoulders, blood drips from the bite, mingling with the now dried blood from Will's hand. Hannibal's movements are fluid and slow, calculated. The muscles in his arms and back seem to ripple like a tiger waiting to pounce. He reaches out to Will, and like a magnet, Will is pulled towards him.

"There he is," Will says as he steps closer, maintaining eye contact with Hannibal. They stand chest to chest and Hannibal slides his hand back into Will's hair, tightening his grip and tilting his head as if he is examining the younger man. Will pushes himself closer causing Hannibal to tug on his curls in an attempt to keep him from getting too close. "I see you. Now make me feel you."

Hannibal lets out a snarl and shoves Will back to the bed by his hair, keeping his fingers tangled. Will crawls onto the bed on his hands and knees as Hannibal gets into position behind him. He pushes Will's head down so he drops to his elbows, chest and face pushed roughly against the mattress as Hannibal lines himself up with his opening, he notices what looks like half a bloody handprint on the younger man's ass. In the haze of preparing him, he hadn't noticed Will used his injured hand. Hannibal growls as he leans down and licks a stripe through the still damp blood, relishing in the taste and the muffled moan it pulls from Will. He pulls back and enters him again with no warning and starts a pounding rhythm. Will lets out a moan followed by a muffled sentence. Hannibal continues pounding into Will and

after a few moments Will starts rocking back and tries to say something again, but it is just as muffled. Hannibal tightens his grip in his hair and pulls him up. Will takes a deep breath before moaning out, “More.”

Hannibal pulls him back even farther so Will’s back is flush to his chest and continues thrusting into him. He slides his hand out of his messy curls and wraps it around his neck. He doesn’t wait for permission. Will wanted to see the darkness. Wanted to experience what it could give him. Hannibal flexes his hand on Will’s delicate throat before finding the right position and starts to squeeze as he adjusts the angle of his thrusts to pound into his prostate. Will’s moans grow louder before they turn into breathy sounds and then shallow gasps. Will brings his hand up to Hannibal’s but instead of trying to pull his hand away, he pushes down slightly, wordlessly telling Hannibal he trusts him and the darkness within him.

Hannibal leans in to speak directly into Will’s ear. “What a remarkable boy you are. You have been so good. Taking exactly what I give you. Would you like to come?” As soon as the words are out of his mouth Will starts nodding, almost frantic. “You can come whenever you like, but know that I will not stop until I find my pleasure as well, even if that is at the expense of your comfort.” Hannibal nips at the lobe of his ear and releases some of the pressure on Will’s throat so he can get a full breath before returning the pressure and moving his other hand to stroke Will’s painfully hard cock. Will nods again, pushing against the hand on his throat and after only a handful of strokes, he is coming in long ropes against Hannibal’s hand and the sheets on the bed.

Hannibal releases his hold on Will’s neck completely and, after the man takes two gasps of air, he shoves him down between his shoulder blades so that his chest is flat to the bed and in his own release. Hannibal places his hands on Will’s hips and pounds into him. Will’s moans turn into groans and Hannibal feels him try to squirm away from the overstimulation. Hannibal tightens his grip on Will’s his and asks, “Do you want me to stop?” without changing his pattern of thrusts. His voice is slightly breathless. He can feel his balls draw tight to his body. His orgasm building.

Will pushes himself up as best he can before looking over his shoulder, tears streaming down his flushed cheeks. “Don’t you dare,” he growls. Hannibal smiles at him for a moment, entirely fond, before shoving him back down and thrusting in once, twice, a third time before spilling deep inside him. He leans down so his chest is against Will’s back and strokes one hand along Will’s flank in a slow soothing motion. He feels the younger man shaking beneath his weight.

“Are you ok, darling?” Hannibal asks as he shifts his weight off of Will, voice closer to normal but with a hint of the gruffness from earlier.

Will lets out a huff of a laugh. “More than. I felt like I could almost come again. I’ve never pushed through an orgasm like that. I felt like I was outside my body.”

Hannibal winces as he pulls out of Will and rolls the young man over so he can look at his tear stained face. Blue eyes bright. “You are so beautiful in suffering,” Hannibal says as he kisses Will’s cheek and swipes the tears away with his broad thumb.

“You’re beautiful too you know? All of you,” Will says as he tries to get up.

“Allow me,” Hannibal says as he stretches and moves towards the door. “Through here?” he asks as he gestures to what he thinks is the bathroom.

Will nods and stretches as well, taking a silent inventory of all the sore parts and possible sites of bruises come morning. Hannibal returns with a warm washcloth for Will to use to clean up. Once he is done with it he tosses it into the hamper in the corner of the room. Hannibal is still standing at the bed and looking uncharacteristically unsure.

“You are welcome to sleep here if you want. I know you mentioned you have an early flight,” Will trails off at the warm look in Hannibal’s eyes.

“I’d like that,” he says and crawls under the covers with Will. Hannibal extends his arm in invitation and Will curls into the man’s side with his head on his chest, listening to the steady beat of his heart. Will usually can’t stand being touched this much, but it feels comfortable with Hannibal and he is so tired. He doesn’t think much about it as both of their breaths become slower and deeper as they drift off to sleep.

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Will wakes up to see Hannibal is gone and time marches on. Fate does decide to bring them together again, but never forget: she is a cruel mistress.

Chapter Notes

A shoutout and many hugs to my partner in crime Venus_in_bloom for helping me talk through the planning of this piece and this chapter specifically. I'm happy to finally feel like it is where I want it enough to share it with all you lovely, patient people. Many hugs, kisses, and fist bumps to you. Now without further ado, here it is!

Will wakes the next morning and instinctively reaches out for Hannibal only to find the mattress beside him cold. He lets out a sigh, rubbing his hand over his face, and lets out a huff of a laugh. Hannibal had cleaned and bandaged his cut before leaving. He smiles and looks at the clock. It was midmorning. He can't remember the last time he slept this well. He slings the blankets off and hears a rustle of paper. When he moves the blankets back he finds a note written on the back of a napkin from Jim's bar. He grabs the now wrinkled napkin and reads the letter written in small, looping script.

My Will,

I wished to wake you this morning before I left, for us to have a chance to say a proper goodbye. I must admit, I do not know if I could have left when faced with your searing gaze that sees so much more than others. I would leave my number, but I know you would not call. Not because you don't want to, but because you'll be under the delusion I don't want to hear from you. I take no offense and hope that the fates see fit to bring us together again. In the meantime, I ask only this: When life becomes maddeningly polite, think about me. Think about me, Will.

Yours,

Doctor Hannibal Lecter VIII

He sighs again, gripping the napkin a little too tight and wrinkling it more before grabbing his book on the bedside table and placing the napkin between the pages. Will knew Hannibal wasn't wrong. If given the option of having the ability to call the mysterious man, he wouldn't. Not because he didn't want to see him again, but because he didn't know what came next. The brief night they shared and communing with each other's darkness was wonderful, but Will can't let himself live like that all the time. He didn't know what he'd become, and that alone scares him.

However, Hannibal did get his wish. Will thinks of him often. Every time the butt of his gun touches the scar on his palm when he draws his weapon. Whenever the rough handle of his filet knife catches on the scar as he guts his catch.

He knew Hannibal could have stitched the deep cut, made it to where it healed smoothly, but he hadn't. Instead, he left the cut ragged and the scar tissue created added texture to his already rough hands. The sensation never fails to push him over the edge when he takes himself in hand.

10 years later…

Will is late. In his defense, Jack set the meeting, knowing he had a class right before it on the other side of Quantico. Will shoves the notes from his lecture and his laptop into his satchel, making his way to the door. He almost escapes but before he reaches the door, he sees the swing of a blonde ponytail. He moves a hand up across his chest, to the strap of his bag, effectively closing off his body language, the other hand pushing up his glasses. He looks up over the frames of his glasses long enough to see that the blonde waiting for him is the new student, Monica or maybe it's Marcy, he isn't sure. Her face is slightly flushed, the pink on her cheeks showcase her many freckles and Will lowers his eyes to her chin, noticing she is biting her bottom lip.

"Dr. Graham," she says, reaching out to touch his arm before he leaves the lecture hall. Her touch lingers, as if she is hesitant to remove her hand. He suppresses a flinch at the touch. He is still deeply in the mind of the Marlowe's killer. He can still feel Mrs. Marlowe's blood on his hands. Feel his heartbeat in his fingers as he imagines walking towards her limp body. He blinks rapidly, pulling himself back to his lecture hall, his student, this conversation.

"Dr. Graham, I wanted to ask you about this assignment. I'm not really sure I understand. What are we meant to do? Pretend to kill this family?" She is swaying a bit, notebook in hand, eager to talk to him. He sees this with most of the new students. They know just enough about him to admire him, maybe even desire him, but not enough to get that voice in the back of their heads that tells them to leave immediately after the lecture is over.

Her teeth are worrying her bottom lip again. If she's not careful, her teeth will break the fragile skin of her lip, the spot has already darkened, blood waiting to break the surface. Will can't take his eyes off of it. He wonders how much longer it will take before her sharp front tooth pierces the… She asked him a question. She is waiting for him to answer.

“In a way, yes.” This feels like a gross simplification of the assignment, but he can work with it. He runs the hand that is not grabbing the strap of his bag over the leather of the bag’s surface, focusing on the rough texture, grounding himself in this moment. “You have the information from the crime scene and we walked through the details in class. I want you to take those facts and what you know about human nature and use it to fill in the gaps.”

Monica, he is eighty five percent sure her name is Monica, seems even more confused, her tongue darts out to wet her lips, lingering over the indentations in the deep red skin from her biting earlier. “I can’t imagine why anyone would want to do something like that.” Her eyes flick up to where the photos from the scene had been projected on the wall, like she can still see them.

Will fights the urge to roll his eyes. “That’s what this class is designed to teach you. I don’t want you to look at these photos and see a perfect family torn apart. I want you to see through the killer’s eyes. The tapping of the phone shows preplanning. This killer picked them, stalked them, knew enough about the security system to know he would need the code and how to get it. This was not his first kill.” Monica balances her notebook on her arm while she starts scribbling notes. “Why was it important that Mr. Marlowe be taken out first? The shot was clean. It was intentional. I didn’t want him to see what happened next, but I needed Mrs. Marlowe to see. I needed her to understand. To feel what happened to her. To know she was being changed.” The scratching of her pen stops abruptly at the change in perspective. Her teeth return to her lip with enough force to finally break the thin skin, blood beading up to the surface, getting caught in the lines of her dry lips.

Will clears his throat and pushes up his glasses. “I hope that helps with your assignment.” He is trying to leave the room, but she is still standing in front of the door, like a deer in headlights. The slightly flirty feelings he felt coming from her have evaporated like rain hitting the hot sidewalks in the summertime in Louisiana. She is afraid. She sees him, not completely, but she sees him merged with the killer they are looking for, and it is enough. Will looks at his watch. Jack is going to be pissed. “If that’s all. I need to speak with Agent Crawford,” he says as he motions towards the door.

Monica comes back to herself all at once with a little gasp. “Yeah, um, yes. Thank you. I think I understand better now.” She backs away from Will, pushing the door open with her hip, not turning her back on him.”I’ll see you tomorrow,” she says as she makes her way, not to the parking lot, but to the main offices. He won’t be seeing her tomorrow.

At this point he can feel the glare Jack is giving the large clock in his office and the cell phone in his pocket starts vibrating. He silences the vibrating but doesn’t send the call to voicemail. Jack will be mad enough without adding that.

Part of Will doesn’t know why he agreed to help Jack with the case in Minnesota. Jack is just one man in a long line of others who had seen Will’s unique talents and tried to twist them to their agenda. For now, Jack wants him to find killers, noble on the surface, but to what end? Will knows that if it was between the job and Will’s life, Jack would pick the job without a second thought. He is nothing more than a tool to Jack. The older man is intrigued by Will, but also wary. His conflicted emotions wrap themselves around Will like a film on his skin whenever he talks to the head of the BSU.

Will reaches Jack's office, adjusts the strap of his bag and his glasses before pushing open the door, not bothering to knock."Nice of you to join us," Jack booms at him as he keeps his head down and shuts the door behind him.

"Well, I am a teacher, Jack. I had a class this morning. Molding the next great minds of the FBI and all that," Will says with a smirk at Jack before setting his bag on the table in the corner of the room since the chair he normally occupies already has someone in it. Will noticed the man in his chair had stiffened when he entered the room, but other than that, Will pays him no attention, until he hears a low chuckle, then he stills, blood running cold.

He knows that chuckle. It's played in his memories for years. *No. It can't be.* Will turns around and sees a man in his mid forties sitting in the chair across from Jack's desk and he cannot believe his eyes. It's Hannibal. He may be older, a little more silver in his hair than had been there all those years ago as well as a few more scars and lines on his face, but it is Doctor Hannibal Lecter. *How? Why? Maybe he doesn't remember.*

Will immediately drops his gaze to the floor as Jack steps in to make introductions. "This is Doctor Hannibal Lecter. He's going to be helping us out with the Minnesota case. Doctor Bloom highly recommended him. She thought he would be an asset to the team." Will doesn't need to look at Hannibal's face to know the man is positively preening at Jack's praise.

The room is still and when it was evident Jack isn't going to continue until they acknowledge each other, Will reaches out a hand for Hannibal to shake. The one with the gnarled scar. Hannibal takes it and shakes his hand, squeezing it gently and running a finger over the scar as he lets his hand drop. Will can't keep his lips from twitching into a small grin. He nods and turns back to Jack.

"Not fond of eye contact are you?" Hannibal asks as Will is turning away. Any thought Will had in his mind that Hannibal didn't remember him evaporates at the touch to his scar and the slightly amused question. It had been the first thing he said to Will in Louisiana all those years ago.

Will shakes his head and damn him if the grin doesn't turn into a smile curling one side of his mouth. "Eyes are distracting. You see too much. You don't see enough," Will takes a breath, this is where he ended the rant back then, but he had more now. He sits down in the chair next to Hannibal's before looking at the man he shared a whole life and one night with all those years ago. "And it's hard to focus when you're thinking those whites are really white or they must have hepatitis, or is that a burst vein? So I try to avoid eyes whenever possible."

Hannibal is amused as well. The quick back and forth is natural and playful. Hannibal leans closer to Will, not letting him put the frame of his glasses in the way of their connection. "I imagine what you see and learn touches everything else in your mind." His words pour over Will. His accent almost a caress, but Will feels his stomach drop. The feeling of being found that he felt back in Louisiana turns into a feeling of being found out and his smile slides off his face. Hannibal sees his demeanor change and continues anyway. "Your values and decency are present yet shocked at your associations, appalled at your dreams. No forts in the bone arena of your skull for things you love."

This can't be happening. Not now. Not in Jack's office. Then it clicks. "Whose profile are you working on?" When Hannibal shrugs but looks towards Jack, so does Will. "Whose profile is he working on?"

"I'm sorry, Will," Hannibal says, leaning back into his chair, crossing his ankle over his knee. He isn't sorry. It is clear in his eyes. Maybe he is sorry that this is happening in front of Jack Crawford, but he loves riling Will up. Will almost calls him on his bullshit before Hannibal continues as if he hears Will's inner musings, "Observing is what we do. I can't shut mine off any more than you can."

Will turns away from Hannibal, breaking the connection. This isn't Hannibal's doing. He would have approached him differently. Closer quarters, neutral ground. No, he knows whose idea this was. Will looks in Jack's direction, looking at a point just past his broad shoulder. "Please don't psychoanalyze me. You won't like me when I'm psychoanalyzed." Will walks over to the table, grabs his bag, and slings it over his shoulder. "Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go give a lecture on psychoanalyzing." He throws one more exasperated look at Hannibal before he exits the room and shuts the door with a bit more force than strictly necessary.

Jack stares at the closed door for a beat, mouth slightly open before regaining his composure and turning to Hannibal. "Maybe we shouldn't poke him like that, Doctor. Maybe use a less direct approach."

Hannibal doesn't need to be told how to handle his Will. He saw that little outburst for what it was: a performance. And he is a willing and active audience. "What he has is pure empathy. He can assume your point of view, or mine -- and maybe some other points of view that scare him. It's an uncomfortable gift, Jack. Perception's a tool that's pointed on both ends." Hannibal studies the photos of the Minnesota murder victims. "This cannibal you have him getting to know... I think I can help good Will see his face." Now, if he could only do it without Will seeing his face as well.

He shakes Jack's hand, collects his untouched coffee cup, and leaves the office noticing that Jack does not escort him to the parking lot or call for an escort. He is left to go as he pleases, under the guise of an unspoken promise that he will go where he says he will. How quaint.

He would be lying if he said he wasn't hoping the troubled agent with the strange cocktail of neurosis was Will Graham when Jack first told him about the opportunity. Will had mentioned all those years ago he wanted to work with the FBI. Looks like he made it. Hannibal's lips twitch into a small smile. He knew it was him as soon as he entered the room. His scent had not changed much in the last ten years. It was exhilarating to see his reaction and that the scar on his hand had healed in such a textured way, a constant reminder.

Pushing through the double doors of the exit to the Visitor parking lot, Hannibal wonders if Will thinks of him as much as he has thought of him, but soon he wouldn't need to wonder. He could ask him, as soon as he figured out a way to point Will in the direction of his killer.

As soon as the air from outside reaches his nose, he fights the urge to grimace. A young girl with auburn hair is smoking directly in front of the exit, smoke wafting with the breeze to blow into his face and over his suit. He makes a point to wave his hand to try to dissipate the

smoke and alert the young woman of her rudeness. Instead of apologizing, she hitches her bag higher up on her shoulders and scoffs, rolling her shockingly blue eyes and turning away. Perhaps it would not be so hard to help Will see his killer after all.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

Hello, Lovely People!

I usually do not like to leave long author's notes, but I feel that I owe y'all an update and an explanation.

When I first started this fic (almost a year ago) it was originally going to end after the letter from Hannibal to Will. A murder case, hot Louisiana smut with Cop!Will, a little hint to them meeting in the future, done! However, these boys refused to let that happen. They can't leave each other alone.

This fic is now a Season 1 rewrite! I will follow canon a bit, but it is definitely a divergence. Not all of the dialogue will be from the show, we are just going to have a good time and keep it loose and let the boys take it where they want.

Please check out the updated tags.

I apologize for the long hiatus. I promise this fic has lived rent free in my mind the entire time. I do have the majority of the next 3 chapters written and I will try to update on a more consistent basis. There has been some things going on in my personal life: mostly good, some bad (all time consuming :p), but it is winding down and I'm so happy to be back.

To everyone who has been leaving comments, kudos, and love, y'all are the real MVPs. This fic is for you and I hope you enjoy it as much as I have enjoyed writing and mapping it out.

Special thanks to my Twitter Wife @Venus_in_bloom for helping me get my thoughts organized and being super supportive. <3

Love you all. Hugs, kisses, and/or fist bumps to everyone who made it this far.

Now, without further ado... On with the show!

The sunshine warms the skin of Will’s face. The light is so bright he tries to turn away, but realizes he can’t. His body is rendered immobile, arms hang at his sides. He glances down at his body, the only sound around him is his sharp intake of breath. He is naked. Antlers pierce his skin. He expects to feel pain or fear, but instead, the puncture points feel oddly cold. He raises a hand to touch an antler, his skin tingles, and when he pulls his hand away, the tips of his fingers are covered in blood.

That isn't right. He fights the urge to wipe the blood on his leg. He looks around, searching in vain for something to clean the blood. The scene won't be right. His hands need to be clean. His chest heaves with the oncoming panic. This isn't what he wants.

He hears footsteps and knows instinctively that he only hears them because the person walking wants him to hear it. The man closes the distance between them, blocking out the sun. He reaches for Will's hand, examining his fingers before bringing them to his lips and sucks them clean. Will avoids eye contact, all at once afraid to see who it is and comforted by his presence.

The man turns away for a moment and returns with a scalpel. Will's eyes are trained on the blade as the cold metal is placed on his chest. Will stays still. He knows better than to fight. He doesn't make a sound. He can tell the other man wouldn't appreciate it and whatever was going to happen would be worse if he put up a struggle.

The man holding the scalpel allows the heat radiating off of Will's skin to warm the instrument before sliding it down his torso, along his sternum. No pressure on the blade. No marks left behind, as if to show Will what he plans on doing next. Wants him to *see* .

Will lets his eyes wander from the blade to the calloused hand that holds it, up the strong forearm, following the lines of the body before resting on the man's face. He tilts his head. It's his face, but something's not right. There's something about the eyes, *his* eyes, but not quite. Yet somehow familiar. The not-quite-Will reaches down and caresses his face. He feels calm, thoughts slower than normal. Each bit of information filtered through his mind at a leisurely pace.

He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath before he feels the blade push into his skin right under the hollow at the base of his throat and slide down his torso before stopping above his belly button. He feels the tips of fingers force their way into the cut and he opens his eyes to find himself looking back, a wicked glint in his eye and his teeth slightly bared. *See?*

Knock, knock, knock.

Will groans as he stretches and reaches for his phone. He squints at the bright screen only to see that his alarm would be going off in another hour. It has to be Jack. He's the only one that would come to Will's hotel room, unannounced, at this ungodly hour. Well, if he is not going to give Will the courtesy of a heads up, if it's such an emergency, Will will answer the door as is: clad in nothing but a pair of boxers and a white undershirt.

As he gets closer to the door, he hears another knock. Not impatient. Almost polite, as if to make sure he heard it. Will pauses at the door before opening it. Something holding him there, hand on the knob, other hand running over his face. He takes a deep breath and unlocks the door, opening it just enough to see out.

Not Jack.

Good morning, Will. May I come in?"

Definitely not Jack.

Hannibal's cheshire cat smile tugs at his lips as it is clear by Will's expression that he is contemplating shutting the door and going back to bed.

"Where's Crawford?" Will asks not meeting Hannibal's eye.

"Deposed in court. The adventure is yours and mine today," he says holding up an insulated back and thermos of what Will is hoping is coffee as a peace offering.

Will doesn't say anything as he turns around and leaves the door open for Hannibal to follow him. He knows when he is in the room because the hairs on the back of his neck begin to prickle. He walks over to his open duffle bag on the low dresser of the room and reaches in to grab a pair of pajama pants, but then decides against it. It feels like some sort of test. Hannibal shows up, unannounced, and works his way into Will's room after showing up, unannounced, at his place of work and working his way into Will's head. Well, two can play at this game.

Will sits down at the small round table where Hannibal is plating what looks like a homemade breakfast. He stretches out, making himself comfortable, but doesn't say anything.

"I'm very careful about what I put into my body. Which means I end up preparing most meals myself. A little protein scramble to start the day. Some eggs, some sausage," he says as he finishes plating Will's portion and hands it to him.

Will nods, using a fork to sort through and identify all the ingredients Hannibal mentioned before tasting it. "This is delicious," he says before looking up, catching Hannibal's eye. "Thank you."

"My pleasure," he replies and Will can tell from the look in his eye, he means it. A moment passes before Hannibal tilts his head and continues on, "I would apologize for my analytical ambush, but I know I will soon be apologizing again and you'll tire of that eventually so I have to consider using apologies sparingly."

Will takes another bite before answering, this time picking through his plate to get a piece of the sausage. He looks up at Hannibal with the hint of a smile. "No need to apologize. I could tell that wasn't really your idea. If you were going to ambush me it would be in neutral territory," Will says, motioning around the hotel room with his free hand, "in close quarters after softening me up." He looks back down at his plate to get another bite, then looks up at Hannibal through his lashes as if to ask *am I right? Are you here to ambush me, Dr. Lecter?*

Will can see a hint of teeth in Hannibal's smile now. "I'm afraid my stance on apologies still stands."

"No apology necessary," Will says, mirroring Hannibal's grin and head tilt now.Hannibal begins eating and they lapse into a companionable silence for a time.

Hannibal is the first to break it. “I admit I was pleasantly surprised to hear you were teaching at Quantico, but I admit to some curiosity on how you ended up here.”

Will has been waiting for this. He assumes Hannibal had been keeping tabs on him, at least loosely as he has been doing for him, but there are some things that wouldn’t be available to the public. He skips the boring parts and jumps to what Hannibal wants to hear. “After the Tourist Killer case, the brass thought I had ‘toughened up’ enough to be put into the field full time. Henri joined me for a while, but could see I was being used as more of a tool than a person. He was all but pushed into retirement and wanted me to leave the force.” Will shakes his head, curls just long enough to bounce a bit with the motion.

“I got a new partner, Daniel. Someone who had been on the force for a while and had something to prove. Shoot first, ask questions later. You know the type.” Hannibal nodded, wanting Will to continue. “For a while, it was ok. Not great, but we were managing. Above average close rate. No one looked too closely,” Will looks back down at his plate, voice lowering just above a whisper. “We went to a warehouse to assist on a bust. Textbook.” He raises his gaze to meet Hannibal’s again and his lip twitches. Hannibal can see just the hint of teeth.

“I’m guessing not so by the book,” Hannibal says when the silence extends past comfortable and Will’s eyes have glazed over slightly.

“No. He was so scared,” Will whispers and Hannibal isn’t sure who he is talking about, but he waits, and is rewarded for his patience by the glazed look in Will’s eye bursting into a bright flame. “My partner and the rest of them stormed into the warehouse. Most of the workers inside ran. A few officers gave chase, but most stuck around to deal with the ones that were already caught. My *partner* wanted to chase after the others, but I wouldn’t go with him. Something felt off. One of the men in the corner of the room had his hands in his pockets. He was acting really antsy. He was so young. Daniel zeroed in on him. Yelled at him to get his hands up. To get on his knees. The whole thing.” Will runs a hand over his face, over his stubble, and to the back of his neck before picking up his fork and picking at his breakfast.

“I walked over, trying to get between them. I could feel the tension rolling off of the kid. He was sweating bullets. Daniel was so hyped up on the adrenaline. He started calling him names like Tweaker,” Will shakes his head. He’s holding the fork in his right hand so tightly his knuckles are white. “I finally got between them. I asked them both to calm down. Daniel was pointing his gun at him. The kid still had his hands in his pockets. I turned my attention to Daniel. I knew he was looking for any reason. When I turned my back, the kid pulled a knife. Daniel went to get a shot off and I grabbed his wrists, forcing the shot off course. The kid stabbed me in the shoulder and took off. Left the knife in it. Just bolted.”

Will goes quiet again and it takes all of Hannibal’s considerable patience to wait for him to continue this time. “It turns out he was just there to make some extra money to help pay for his daughter’s cancer treatment. He was afraid his mother would be mad at him for being involved.”

“What happened to the boy?”

“Daniel shot him. In the back,” the fire in Will’s eyes rages with such intensity anyone else would have looked away, but not Hannibal. He burns with him. In that glorious fire.

“And after,” Hannibal trails off, prompting Will to continue.

“I was encouraged to leave the force due to medical reasons, specifically my shoulder. It took me a while to get full range of motion. It still hurts like hell in the cold or when it’s going to rain. And no one wants to be partners with a cop that chooses a *thug* over his own partner,” Will’s tone changes at the last bit, like he is quoting the words as they were said to him. “ Daniel got a letter in his file about the incident, but it doesn’t seem to have slowed him down. I belatedly took Henri’s advice and went to school. Studied Forensics. Wrote a monograph,” Will cocks an eyebrow at Hannibal.

Hannibal nods. “Time of death based on insect activity. I read it. It’s quite good.”

“Thank you,” Will says with a smile. “Bugs don’t have any ulterior motives, only patterns. They live, they feed, they breed, and they die. Simple.”

“But here you are, yet again, in the field, working for a man who, I hope I am not overstepping when I say this,” Will scoffs but allows him to continue, “working for a man that sees you as a fragile teacup only to be used during special occasions. A fancy tool, but a tool nonetheless.”

Will laughs, big and open. His entire body is involved and he reaches across the table to touch Hannibal’s wrist, like he wants him to feel the reverberations in his body, be a physical part of the moment and Hannibal savors it. Wishes he could bottle it. Wishes he wasn’t wearing long sleeves so he could feel Will’s scared palm on his bare skin. Once he recovers, he drops Hannibal’s wrist and returns to his breakfast, starting to eat again as he says, “Much like the bugs, I guess I am a creature of habit,” and this time his smile turns to something with more teeth, a slightly wicked thing. Hannibal feels a rumble of satisfaction in his chest, but fights it back.

“I don’t think I believe you, Dr. Graham.” And if Hannibal didn’t know better he would swear Will winks at him.

They continue their meal in companionable silence. When they finish, Will stands and starts clearing up. “What about you? What have you been up to?” Will asks over his shoulder while he is rinsing the container and utensils in the sink.

“Nothing quite so exciting.” Will shoots him a slightly incredulous look. “When we met, I had just made the switch from surgeon to psychiatrist. New Orleans was a favor for a friend. It was my first consultation. Since then, I have opened my own practice in Baltimore.”

“What made you leave surgery?”

Hannibal walks towards the sink, reaching for the container and dries it. “Psychiatry offers better hours,” he says with only a hint of mirth in his features.

“Fine,” Will sniffs playfully. “Keep your secrets.” He turns off the water, dries his hands and pours another cup of coffee and takes it to the chair at the table.

“I don’t want to keep secrets. I want you to suss it out.”

“You want another show?”

“It has been a while, hasn’t it?”

“Well I suppose.” Will picked up his coffee and took a long drink, looking at Hannibal over the cup. When he finished, he set the cup down and pushed it and his plate away, clearing the space before him. “I kept up with you too, you know.” He extended a hand in a gesture to Hannibal. “You weren’t just a good surgeon. You were the best, according to the statistics. Something must have happened.”

“I lost a patient,” Hannibal says, offering a bit of information to see what Will will do with it.

“No. That wasn’t it,” Will waves his hand in the air as if he could sweep aside the words. “Even as a great surgeon,” Hannibal quirks a brow and Will rolls his eyes, “even as the best, you would lose patients. No one is that good, and you are confident enough in your ability to not see it as a failing, but merely inevitable. No. It was something else.” Will may be sitting in the room, but his mind is far away picking at the seams of Hannibal’s person suit, looking for clues. “It was the variables. It was the fact that you could do everything perfectly, and the patient could die anyway. The organ could still fail. Another problem, unrelated, could cause destruction. Uncontrolled destruction. Unpredictable. It left you unsatisfied.”

“Still a clever boy I see.”

Will fights the blush that creeps up his neck. He stands and Hannibal does as well. “You asked, in not so many words, about how things have been during the last ten or so years.” Will looks up at Hannibal, he’s closer than he thought he would be. They are standing shoulder to shoulder, Will can feel the wool of Hannibal’s brown sweater on his bare arm, raising goosebumps. “I left out a detail.”

“Did you?” Hannibal asks, barely above a whisper, but they are so close, his hot breath washes over Will’s face causing him to shiver. Not letting Will escape his gaze.

“Yes,” Will whispers back. “It’s been polite. Maddeningly polite.” Without thinking more about it, he grabs Hannibal by the bit of tie above the collar of his sweater and pulls him in for a kiss. They bump noses and their teeth clink together. Will has a beat to regret his decision before he feels Hannibal huff what sounds like a sigh of relief before running his tongue along Will’s bottom lip.

It’s like no time has passed. Will’s hands find Hannibal’s slightly grayer hair, keeping their mouths together. He’s getting hard and wants to press his erection into Hannibal, make him feel what he does to him, but the part of his brain that is still on sounds the alarm about possibly ruining his pants. “Off,” Will breathes against Hannibal’s mouth.

“Hmm?” Hannibal asks as he kisses Will’s jaw and down his neck.

“Take off your pants. Oh, yes, there,” Will moans pushing Hannibal’s head down as his teeth graze his pulse point.

“Is that how you ask for things?” Hannibal asks and his tone is playful before he nips at Will’s neck.

“I’m not asking. Unless you want your expensive suit ruined, take it off.”

“How do you plan on ruining it, Will?”

Will pulls away slightly to get his hands between them, starting to remove Hannibal’s belt and unbuttoning his pants. “I don’t plan on ruining your suit. I want to ruin you,” he says with a huff, pulling Hannibal’s belt roughly from the loops, “and I will, as soon as you take these off, and possibly this as well,” he says tugging at Hannibal’s sweater and button up.

Hannibal removes his sweater and tosses it to the low dresser, on top of Will’s duffle bag. He loosens and removes his tie, tossing it to the bed, drawing out a head tilt from Will before he begins working on the buttons of his shirt, when Will reaches for them, Hannibal playfully slaps his hand away. “I remember the impatience you treat my clothing with.” He reaches out for Will’s wrist, wrapping his long fingers around it and pulling him forward and pushing him to his knees. “However, you can make yourself useful in other ways.” Will looks up at him and his eyes are almost completely black. He licks his lips and removes Hannibal’s pants completely. When he looks up, Hannibal is shirtless and his monster is back all black eyes and wicked grin. He can see his teeth, they gleam in the dim light and his mouth waters even more thinking about what that mouth can do. What it has already done.

Just when he leans forward to lick the leaking tip of Hannibal’s cock, he’s pulled back by his curls. He lets out a low hiss that borders on a growl. Hannibal’s smile widens, eyes narrow in challenge as he pulls Will’s shirt over his head exposing his slight pale skin. Hannibal is rewarded for the effort when Will leans forward again and he gets a view of the muscles rippling in Will’s back.

Once shirtless, Will finally, finally reaches out and grabs the base of Hannibal’s cock. They both let out a groan at the touch. It feels like it’s been forever. It feels like it was yesterday.

Will licks at the leaking head, humming at the taste and looks up at Hannibal. All pink cheeks and wild curls as he takes the head into his mouth, swirling his tongue over the tip. He can’t help the pleased quirk to his lips when he feels Hannibal’s hand tighten in his hair again. This time forcing him to take him deeper. He relaxes his throat and lets Hannibal set the pace for a while.

When Hannibal’s breathing quickens, Will pulls back and shakily gets to his feet. l“Not like this,” Will says, wiping at the corner of his mouth with the back of his hand. His cock tenting his boxers obscenely, a wet spot making them transparent in the front. He pulls them down over his erection and it slaps against his stomach, long, thick, and leaking.

He captures Hannibal’s mouth in a deep kiss. Hannibal hums as he tastes himself on Will’s tongue. He is being led backwards to the bed. He feels when the backs of his legs hit the edge and Will pushes him down and urges him to get fully on the bed. Hannibal doesn’t turn his

back on Will. It's not smart to turn your back to a predator. Instead he crawls backwards until he feels the pillows and Will follows him on hands and knees, crawling up his body, leaving licks and nips along his way.

"I want you to fuck me. It's all I can think about. I need to feel you inside me. Nothing and no one has come close." Hannibal lets out a snarl at the mention of others and pulls Will up so they are eye to eye. *You are mine.* The look says. *There are no others.* "Show me," Will says like he heard the thoughts and he drags his scared palm over Hannibal's chest and grinds his painfully hard cock into Hannibal's. They are kissing again, but it's more a clashing of teeth and tongues. Will ruts against him. Seeking friction. Full of need.

Hannibal flips them and Will is floating. He isn't sure where it came from, but a slick finger is circling his hole, while a hand is tangled in his hair, and lips are on his neck. Then two fingers are thrusting into him and he's begging for more. Please. Anything. Everything. Hannibal pulls his head back until he can just about see the headboard, like his neck will snap and teeth graze his trachea before biting down, just on this side of breaking skin and Will feels his balls tighten and the familiar twist in the pit of his stomach. "I'm gonna. I'm gonna come."

The teeth pull back to be replaced by a tongue licking over the bite. "Come. Come for me, but you remember the rule." And of course he does. He would never forget a single word Hannibal has ever said to him. *You can come whenever you like, but know that I will not stop until I find my pleasure as well, even if that is at the expense of your comfort.* The memory of the words and the feel of his teeth back at his throat push him over the edge and he clenches down on Hannibal's fingers. Two, maybe three, he's lost track, but Hannibal's eyes are burning into his and he tries to keep his open, desperate to take in every detail of the man's face.

He lets out a loud moan as cum spurts from his untouched cock and Hannibal tuts. "As much as I love the filthy sounds you make, we do not want to alert the rest of the team to what we are up to. Do we?" Will can only shake his head and bite his lip as Hannibal removes his fingers and strokes his cock through the aftershocks. "Do you think you can behave?" he asks with a cocked brow as he twists his fingers in his curls and Will brings a hand to his mouth to stifle the sound. Hannibal is as fast as a snake and reaches out to grab Will's wrist and pin it to the bed beside him. Will shakes his head in answer to his question, biting his lip even harder to keep the little mewling sounds he is making from becoming too loud.

Hannibal leans down and captures Will's lips with his own, swallowing his cries. He slows down the pace of his fingers and pulls away just enough so he can speak against Will's kiss swollen lips. "I have an idea, if you are amenable of course," he trails off and he can see a slight bit of annoyance in Will's lust blown eyes. Like he can't believe that Hannibal is so composed while he is covered in cum and feels flayed. All his nerves exposed.

There is a flash of something but it's too quick for Hannibal to react and Will pushes forward and sinks his teeth into the old scar he made in Hannibal's shoulder all those years ago. Hannibal lets out a huff of breath in response and Will clamps down harder, moaning slightly when the taste of hot copper hits his tongue.

Hannibal is growling now and Will knows he only has a moment to savor this so he laps at the blood pooling at the bite mark before a large hand is flat on his chest, pushing him back to the mattress with enough force he's winded.

"I forgot what a delightful minx you are," Hannibal rasps and there is no trace of anger on his face, just open lust. "But you didn't answer my question."

Will rolls his eyes, a bloody grin spreading across his face before saying, "I'm amenable," in a decent approximation of Hannibal's accent and Will swears the lust in the air thickens. "Narcissist," he hisses at Hannibal as he reaches to the foot of the bed and grabs his tie. "I can't promise not to ruin it, but whatever it takes so I can finally feel you" he says eyeing the tie and reaching up to wipe the blood from his mouth. Hannibal stops him and kisses him, licking at the blood on his lower lip and Will relaxes into the kiss, eyes rolling back.

"I love the taste of me on you." Hannibal seems to weigh his options, head tilting as he looks at Will, lips swollen from their kisses. Teeth pink with Hannibal's blood. Hannibal brings the tie to Will's mouth, but then tosses it to the side, crushing his lips to Will's again before pulling back just enough to whisper. "I'll risk it. I would never deprive you of your teeth."

Will hums and nuzzles his face against Hannibal's cheek, as Hannibal applies more lube to his fingers and slides three of them back inside him. Will's eyes roll back in his head at the feeling. It's too much. It's not enough. He squirms as Hannibal runs his fingers over Will's swollen prostate. Hannibal places his other hand on Will's stomach, keeping him in place. After another moment of torture, Hannibal removes his fingers and spreads the excess lube on his cock.

Without much warning, Hannibal slams into Will, hand still spread wide on his stomach as he bottoms out. Will's scream is strangled due to trying to hold back but it's clawed out of him. His cock is miraculously hard again, red and leaking. Reflexive tears well up in his eyes and he is beautiful. So beautiful Hannibal can't look away. Can't imagine a world in which he isn't his in every way possible. He surges forward, pushing Will up the bed and captures his mouth in a biting kiss as he thrusts into him hard, fast, marking him from the inside out.

Will begs. He isn't sure for what, but Hannibal returns his nuzzle from earlier and a growl fills Will's ear as he feels Hannibal's rhythm falter and he instinctively clenches around him right as Hannibal wraps his hand around Will's cock and they cum within seconds of each other.

The room is filled with their heavy breathes and the scent of sex as Hannibal kisses Will's neck slowly. The action feels tender. Still animalistic like a lioness licking her cub, but less of the all encompassing, bone shaking coupling of a few moments ago. Will hums and leans into the feel of his lips on his heated skin, wrapping his arms around him a little tighter.

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

It's time for the boys to get to work on the Hobbs case. After a bit of distraction, they find themselves face to face with the Minnesota Shrike.

Chapter Notes

As always, thank you to my Twitter wife Venus_in_bloom. She's amazing and always helps me whenever I'm stuck. She's a treasure.

Hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

His phone buzzes along the bedside table and right before it vibrates off the edge, he grabs it. Clearing his throat before answering. It does little good and his "This is Will," sounds strained and raspy to his own ears.

"Geez, Graham. You sound terrible."

He squeezes his eyes together and swallows hard before answering, "Good morning to you too. Was there a reason for your call other than to," but she cuts him off, excited to get him up to speed.

"Oh, yes actually. We nailed down the search to two places due to the type of metal. I will email you the details and the warrants have been faxed to the front desk. Stop by on your way out and pick them up and you should be good to go," she pauses for a moment before adding, "if you are feeling up to it," she adds but her concern is overshadowed by the sarcasm.

Will rolls his eyes. "I'm fine. I'll head there now." He ends the call and turns to face Hannibal who is on his side, head propped up on his hand, looking at Will with ill disguised interest. "Well," he places the phone back on the bedside table and stretches, arching slightly into Hannibal's warmth, "I'm sure you heard all that, but we've got to get going." He looks down at himself and then adds, "after a shower." He turns to face Hannibal, who hasn't moved an inch since he answered the phone, and looks up at him through his lashes. "Care to join?"

Hannibal sits up and touches the bite mark on his shoulder gingerly, feeling the hot slick of blood on his fingertips that matches the red tint on Will's lips. He nods and Will looks like he

wants to close the distance between them. Like he wants to lean up and capture his lips in another kiss, but he closes his eyes and leaves the bed, leading the way to the bathroom.

They start to shower as if they have done this together a hundred times. While Hannibal is soaping his body, Will locks eyes with him as his fingers graze over the fresh bite on his shoulder until blood mixes with the water rolling off his shoulders and down his chest. The diluted blood getting lost in his graying chest hair. He smiles when Hannibal doesn't flinch, and instead his pupils blow wide. "Does it hurt?" he asks in barely more than a whisper.

"Yes," Hannibal answers with a hint of a growl.

"Good," he says and Hannibal pushes their bodies together to kiss the smile off Will's lips. He turns their bodies until Will is under the spray. Water on the right side of scalding running over their faces and bodies, trying to find gaps in the places they touch, but not finding any. Hannibal wraps an arm around Will's back, keeping him pressed hard against his body and slides his other hand into Will's curls. Will ruts up against Hannibal, not fully hard. He would be surprised if he could get hard again after cumming twice less than an hour ago, but the overstimulation of his sensitive flesh against Hannibal's strong body feels too good to stop.

They break their kiss when the mix of the heat of the shower and the lack of oxygen makes Will feel like he is drowning. He leans forward so his forehead rests against Hannibal's, still close enough to share breath. Will may be too worn out to reach full hardness, but Hannibal is not. His fully hard cock is pressed up against Will's body, the tip dark and leaking. Will wraps his hand around it, squeezing a bit before running his hand over the full length.

"Do you feel that?" Will asks. Hannibal lets out a growl in response. "You gave that to me," he whispers directly into Hannibal's ear as he strokes him with long, slow pulls, every now and then letting the gnarled scar on his palm catch on his foreskin. "I think about you," his tongue darts out to lick the shell of Hannibal's ear, "everytime I touch myself. When I run my hands over my body, " and as he says this it's like Hannibal just remembered he has hands and he reaches for Will, both hands finding his hair. Not pulling him closer or away, just holding.

"When I run my hands over my body," he repeats, "it's like a part of you is touching me." Will quickens his pace as he feels and hears Hannibal's breath catch and sees the muscles of his lower abdomen sink in. Will nips at the lobe of his ear. "You've always made me feel so good. Even after that night." He pulls away so he can look Hannibal directly in the eye. "Show me how good I make you feel," he purrs and the hands in his hair clench and tangle in his curls.

Hannibal looks like he is holding back, but that simply won't do. Will presses his body closer and speeds up his strokes. "I said, 'show me.'" Hannibal cums with another growl, through clenched teeth like it's dragged out of him. His release coats Will's hand and stomach. He hums in pleasure and tilts his head up to kiss Hannibal who immediately deepens the kiss. They take a moment to catch their breaths before continuing to wash each other.

They dry off and dress. When Hannibal reaches for his tie, Will chuckles. "I think that may be a lost cause." The tie is covered in lube and a few drops of blood. Hannibal grimaces and drops it in the trash can by the desk and shoots Will a withering look. "Hey. Don't look at me.

That was all you.” He walks up to Hannibal and unbuttons the top button of his shirt that shows above the collar of his sweater. “When was the last time you did something in a professional setting without a tie?”

Hannibal leans into Will, just breaking the bubble of personal space around him before answering. “I was still at the hospital.”

Will grins and steps away, grabbing his keys. “I need to stop by the front desk to pick up the warrants and information on where we are going. Maybe you head back to your room and grab a bit more of that coffee before we go to the first site, hmm?” The hum at the end is playful and takes the bite out of what is more or less a dismissal. Hannibal’s lip twitches. A confident Will is truly a delight.

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They drive in companionable silence until they reach the first construction site. Will puts the rent-a-car in park and looks over to Hannibal. There is the ghost of a grin on his face and a bit of mischief in his eyes.

“What are you smiling about?” Will asks, cocking an eyebrow.

“Peeking behind the curtain,” Hannibal says as he unbuckles his seatbelt. “Curious how the FBI goes about its business when it isn’t kicking in doors.”

Will scoffs and rolls his eyes. “You’re lucky we’re not doing house to house interviews.” Hannibal tilts his head in question. “We found a little piece of metal in the clothes Elise Nichols had on. A shred from a pipe threader.”

Hannibal keeps looking at him as if there is more. When Will does not continue Hannibal prompts him. “And Jack Crawford, head of the Behavioral Science Unit, believes that the best use of your time is tracking down metal shards?”

“Not quite. Katz was able to track it down between two sites.” Hannibal looks mildly impressed and Will nods in agreement. “Now my job is to figure out which of the pipe threaders that worked at those two sites is our guy.”

“And Jack Crawford wants me to make sure you’re of sound mind and body... to look for metal pipe threaders?”

Will smiles. “That’s between you and Jack.” Will unbuckles his seatbelt and leaves the vehicle. Hannibal watches him stride up to the office located at the front of the construction site. He has a certain swagger about him between the way he walks and how he wears his brown leather holster closer to the front of his body. Not trying to hide it. Openly dangerous. That image is only being tamped down by his doe eyes and soft curls.

After a bit of back and forth with Dixie, the receptionist, they find themselves surrounded by file boxes, sifting through records. Will’s attention is solely on the stack of papers he is reading through. Hannibal steps closer to him, lightly bumping his shoulder to get his attention.

“What exactly are we looking for?” Hannibal asks, knowing that he is going to be observing Will more than the records, but feels like he should ask, if only for the sake of appearances.

“At this stage, anything really. But mostly anything peculiar.” Will answers without looking up from the stack he is steadily skimming. He closes the file around the records and moves on to the next.

The receptionist’s voice fills the small space. She’s on the phone with what sounds like a friend and giving her a play by play of what they are doing. After going through about two boxes, Will stops abruptly, holding a letter and putting the rest of the papers back in the box. “Garrett Jacob Hobbs,” he announces to the room.

“One of our pipe threaders. Those are all the resignation letters. Plumbers union requires them whenever members finish a job.” Dixie whispers something into the phone before hanging up.

“Did Mr. Hobbs have a daughter?” Will asks, closing the lid on the box, letter still in his hand.

Dixie shrugs, uninterested. ”Might have.”

“She’d be eighteen or nineteen, windchaffed? Plain but pretty? She would have auburn hair. About this tall.” Will holds out his hand in front of him to show the height but Dixie is shaking her head.

“Maybe. I don’t know. I don’t keep company with these people.” At that last remark, Will turns his attention away from the woman and back to the letter in his hand. Mind busy, but not inclined to share with the class.

“What is it about Garret Jacob Hobbs you find so peculiar?” Hannibal asks, hoping a poke to the hive will get the bees agitated.

“Left a phone number. No address,” he says like that answers the question.

“Therefore he has something to hide?” Hannibal asks, slightly skeptical.

Will shrugs, not putting too much weight on the matter. “Everyone else left an address.” He turns back to Dixie. “You have an address for Mr. Hobbs?”

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Will knows the older man is up to something. His tells would be imperceptible to anyone else but Will has seen that flame in his eyes before: like the cat that caught the canary. He sees it again as the doctor’s lithe finger unhooks his seatbelt, eyes glued to the last known address of Garrett Jacob Hobbs.

Will is just about to ask him about it when they exit the rental car, but the commotion makes the original question moot. There stands Hobbs with a woman Will assumes to be his wife. The woman is bleeding profusely from a gaping wound in her neck. He tosses her limp body to the ground and looks at Will with his teeth bared before backing back into the house.

Will slams his car door, reaching for his weapon. He looks towards Hannibal before hissing, “Hannibal, what did you do?” through his teeth. The man’s lips twitch and he motions for Will to go ahead in an “after you gesture.”

Will reaches the porch at a sprint, weapon drawn. He lowers it only to check the pulse of the woman on the ground. He knows she’s gone, but he wouldn’t forgive himself if he didn’t check. And if he is being honest with himself, he is stalling. He knows what he will see when he enters the house. The blood of Hobbs’ wife has already painted itself on the walls of Will’s mind. He doesn’t want his daughter’s to join it.

He kicks in the door and follows the trails of blood to the kitchen. “Hobbs! FBI! It’s over,” he calls out ahead of him. Is it a warning? He isn’t sure. When he reaches the kitchen, Garrett Jacob Hobbs has his daughter in his arms and a knife at her throat. He is leaned into her, whispering something as she cries. She looks up at Will. Their eyes meet. Their eyes, so similar, the same shocking shade of ice blue, and she nods before closing her eyes.

Will pulls the trigger as he is walking towards the two of them. He pulls it again and again and again. Emptying the clip into Garrett Jacob Hobbs, but not before he cuts into his daughter’s throat. Will drops the now empty gun and closes the short distance between them, kneeling down beside her gasping body. She’s trying to talk. Trying to tell Will something. He wraps his hand around the wound in her neck trying to force the blood back in. To keep it from escaping. It’s in her hair, his hands, down to his wrists, covering the face of his watch. It’s everywhere. It keeps flowing between his fingers as he shushes her, trying to look calm as his mind is filled with static.

He tenses as he feels someone else has entered the room, like a lioness protecting its young from another predator, but then he notices it is Hannibal.

“Save her,” he pleads, not looking at the other man, still trying desperately to get the wound to stop bleeding. She is still looking at him, opening and closing her mouth like a fish out of water. No sound comes out. After a beat he looks up at Hannibal who is watching Will with a slightly tilted head, calculating. His expression is almost unreadable, but Will can detect a bit of *why* coming through.

“Help me. Please?” Will tries again and after a momentHannibal kneels beside him replacing Will’s hands with his own. The blood escaping around his fingers slows and Will can hear the sound of sirens.

“See?” Garrett Jacob Hobbs says, still bleeding and breathing against the kitchen cabinets. Will looks at Hobbs and then back to his daughter being held to this life by the strong hands of a man Will knows everything and nothing about.

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The cavalry arrives as Hobbs closes his eyes for the last time, body slumping further down the stained kitchen cabinets. Abigail’s breaths are ragged, but steady. Her freckled face is bone white under all the blood. Hannibal keeps his hands in place until the EMTs put her on a stretcher and wrap the wound.

Will gets shepherded away by a boisterous Jack Crawford, exasperatedly asking questions and speaking with his hands. Will is covered in blood. It's on his glasses and covers his hands like silky red gloves. He does his best to answer Jack's questions. He knows there will be more no matter how many he answers now. More questions and reports to write. This isn't over. It's barely even started, but Will can't worry about that right now. His mind is filled with the terrified expression on Abigail's face as she clung to life under his hands.

"How did you know Hobbs was our man? Why him?" Jack asks, and from his tone, it is clear this is at least the second time he has asked.

Will shrugs again. "He didn't leave an address. All the others left addresses, and when I asked about a daughter, the receptionist wasn't sure. It felt like a lead worth checking out."

"How did he know you were coming?"Jack asks and Will doesn't know how to answer. He knows what his gut is telling him, but that isn't for Jack to know.

"I'm not sure. We knew that he was spiraling, especially after Elise's body was found.If he was killing these girls to keep from hurting his daughter, maybe he finally lost that battle."

"But today? This morning?" Jack pushes, but Will ignores him. His eyes are focused on Hannibal speaking with the EMTs who seem to be trying to check him for injuries.

Jack realizes he isn't going to get more from Will and claps him on the back. "Good work, Graham. I want your report by Monday. Take the rest of the day to try and relax."

Will nods and walks over to hear Hannibal telling the tech he doesn't need any kind of treatment. "I am fine. I assure you. I wasn't hurt."

"There is blood on your shirt. On the inside of the collar," the tech says motioning towards a small red spot on Hannibal's shirt, near the bite mark Will had left that morning, reopening the old scar.

"It's not from the events here. There is no need-"

The tech is insistent and cuts him off. "If it's not from you then I assume that the CSIs will want your clothes as evidence."

Something dark flashes in Hannibal's eyes before his surgeon's smile is back in place, confidence radiating from him. "It will be no problem. Thank you for your concern." Without saying another word Hannibal nods towards Will, who is fighting back a smirk, it is neither the time nor the place, and steps into the ambulance next to Abigail's stretcher and the doors are closed behind him.

After more questions, having to hand over his own blood covered clothes to a very amused Beverly Katz, and running back by his room to grab a shower and fresh set of clothes, Will makes it to the hospital. He isn't sure what he is going to find. He's not sure he will ever be able to see Abigail's face without seeing it covered in blood. He hesitates before entering her room, tempted to knock out of habit, but he shakes his head to clear it.

He opens the door and is not surprised to see Hannibal there, but he is surprised to see the man asleep. Hand in hand with Abigail Hobbs. He sits down in the chair pulled up next to the other side of her bed and leans back, ready to stay for a while. The steady sounds coming from the monitor calms his nerves. She is alive. They aren't sure if she will ever wake up, but for right now, in this moment: Abigail Hobbs is alive. Will found her and Hannibal saved her. What that means is a question for another day.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading. Hope you enjoyed it. <3

End Notes

Thank you all for reading my story. I really appreciate it!

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